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ソイル

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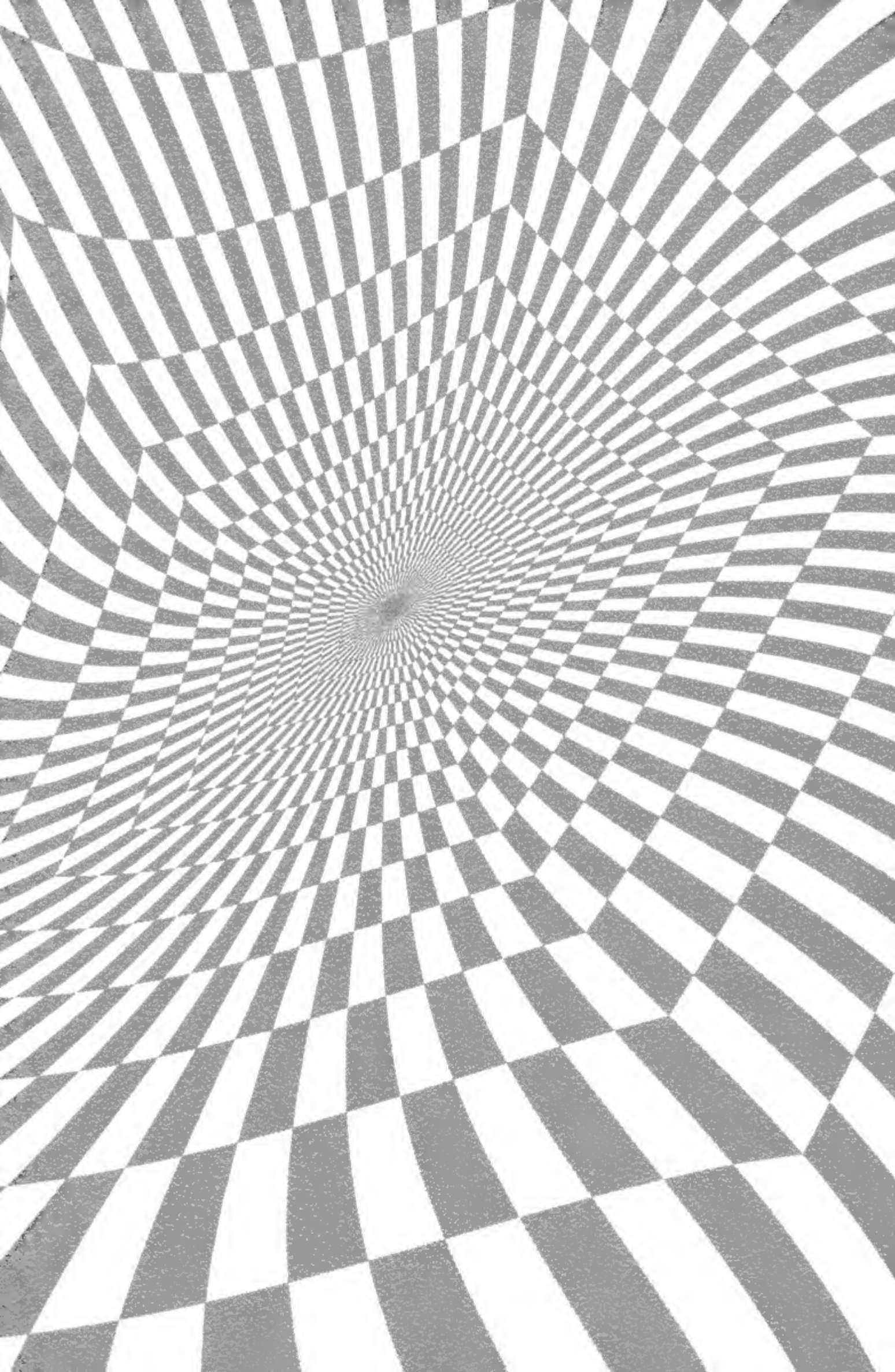
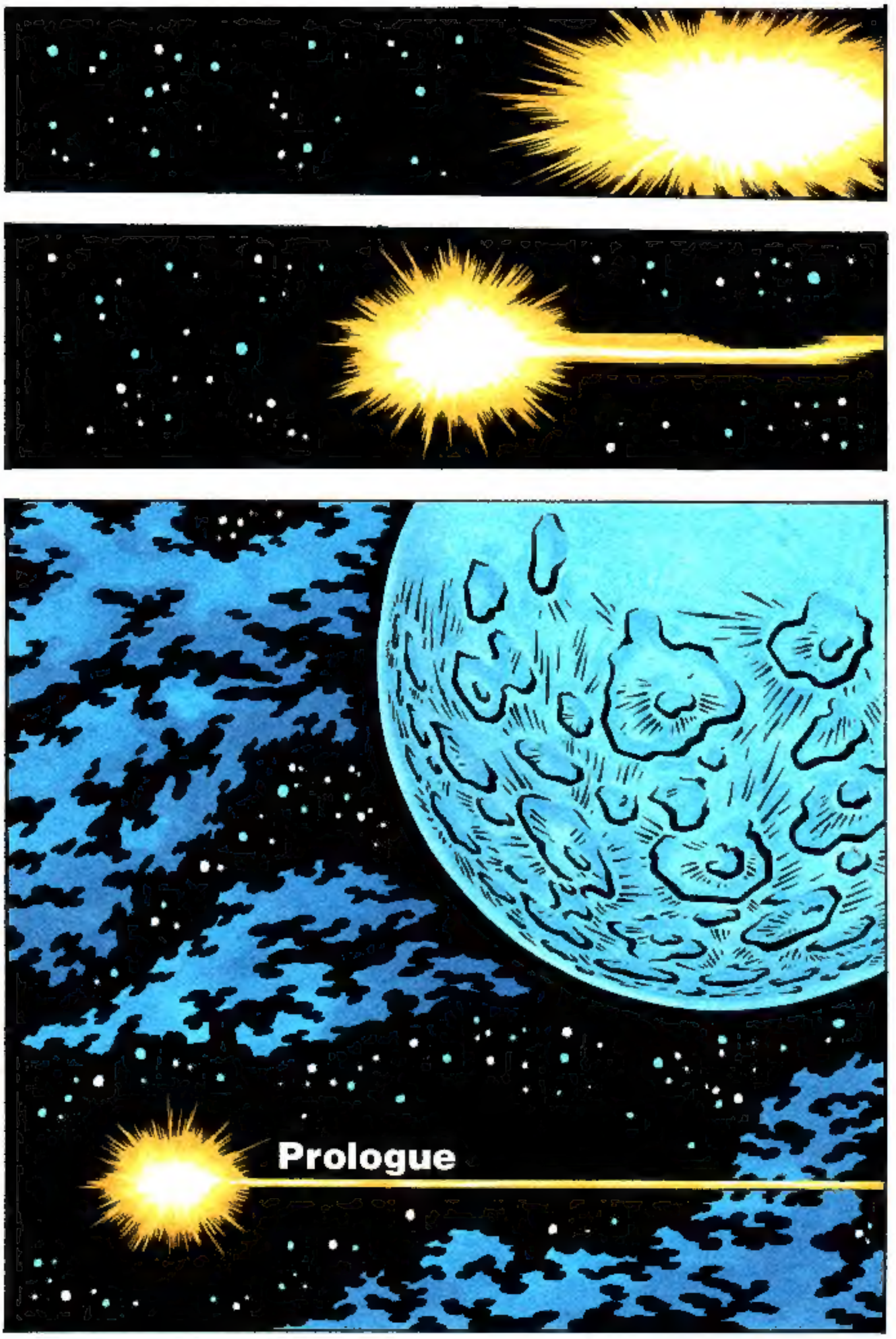
SOIL［ソイル］1 カネコアツシ

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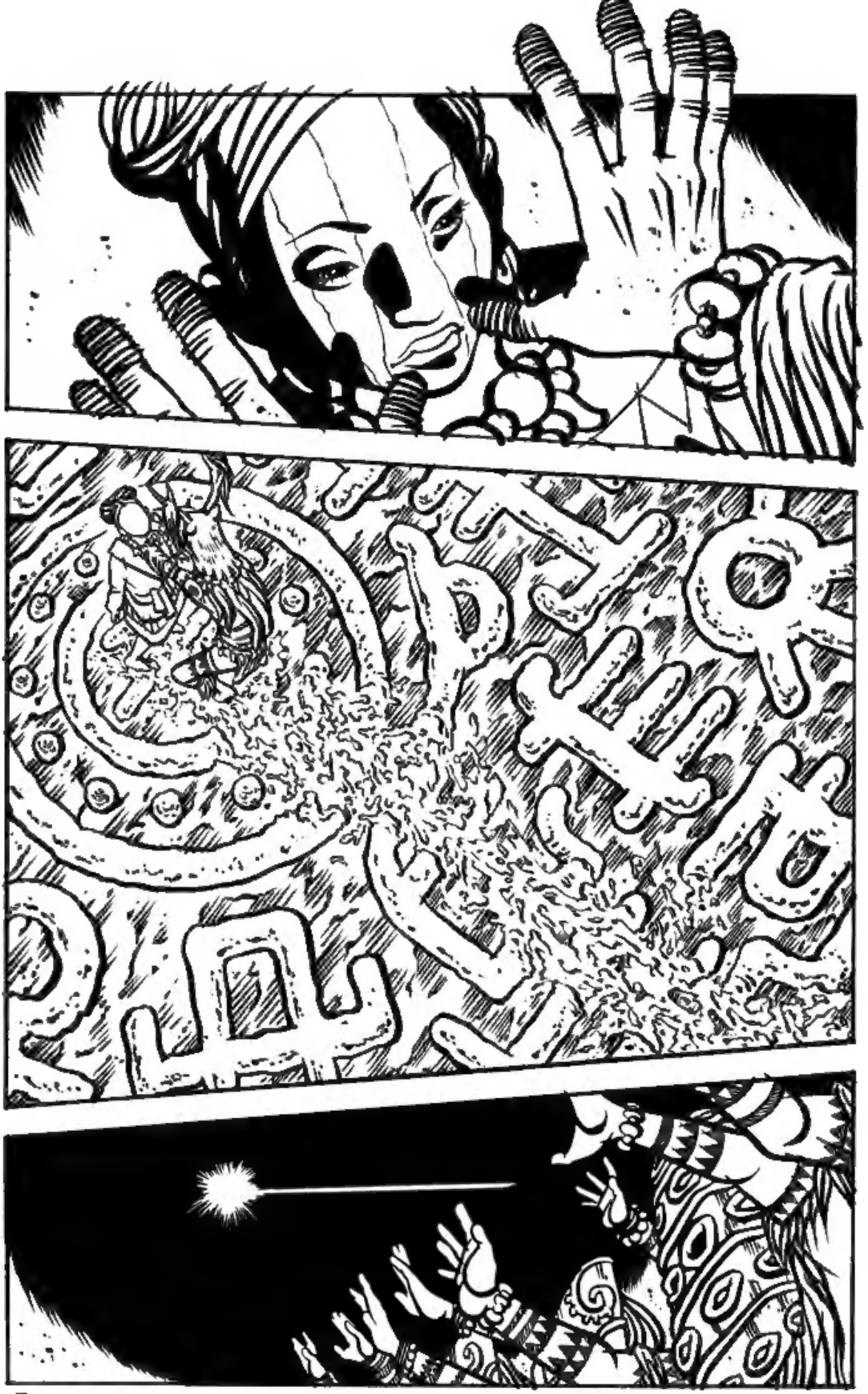
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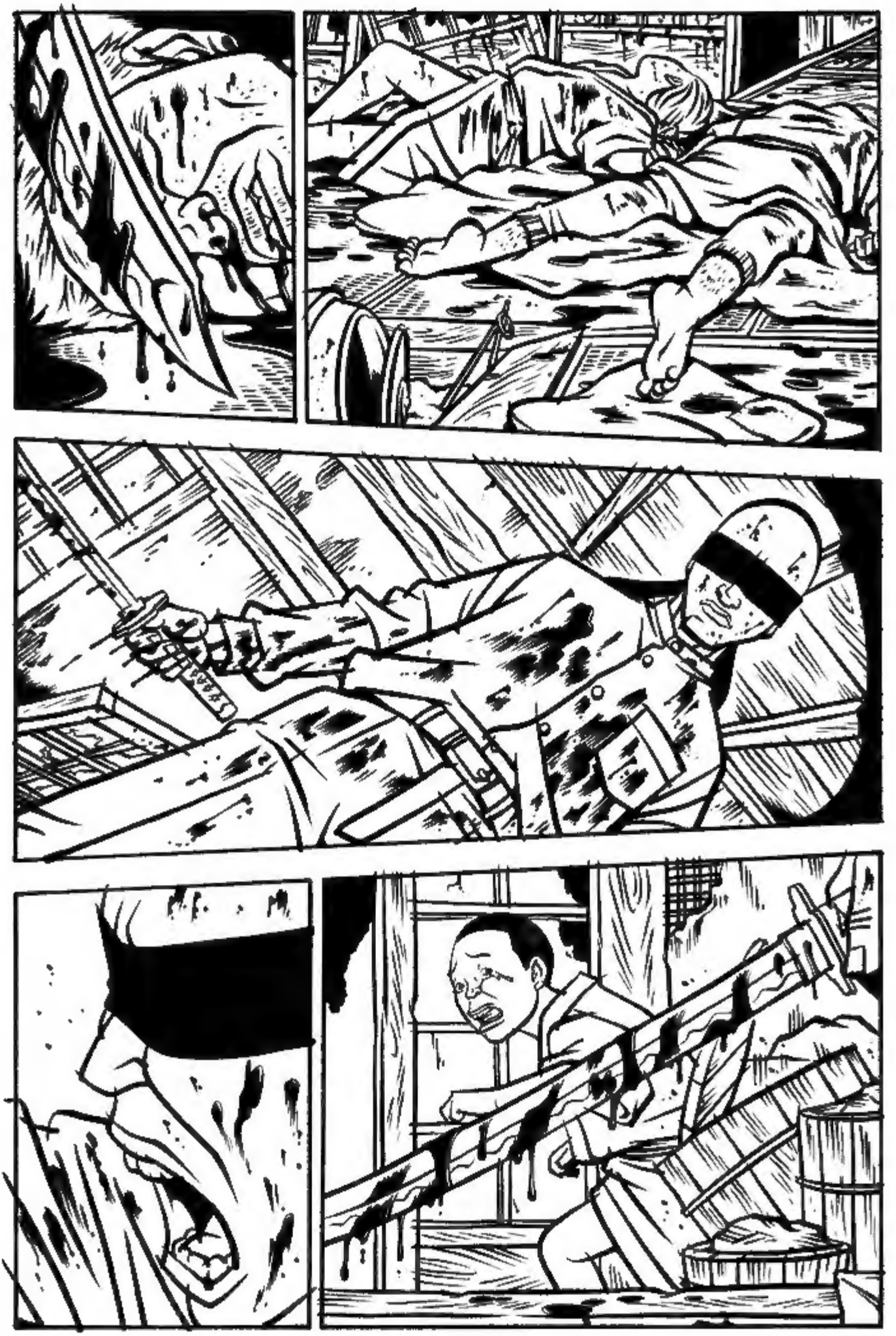

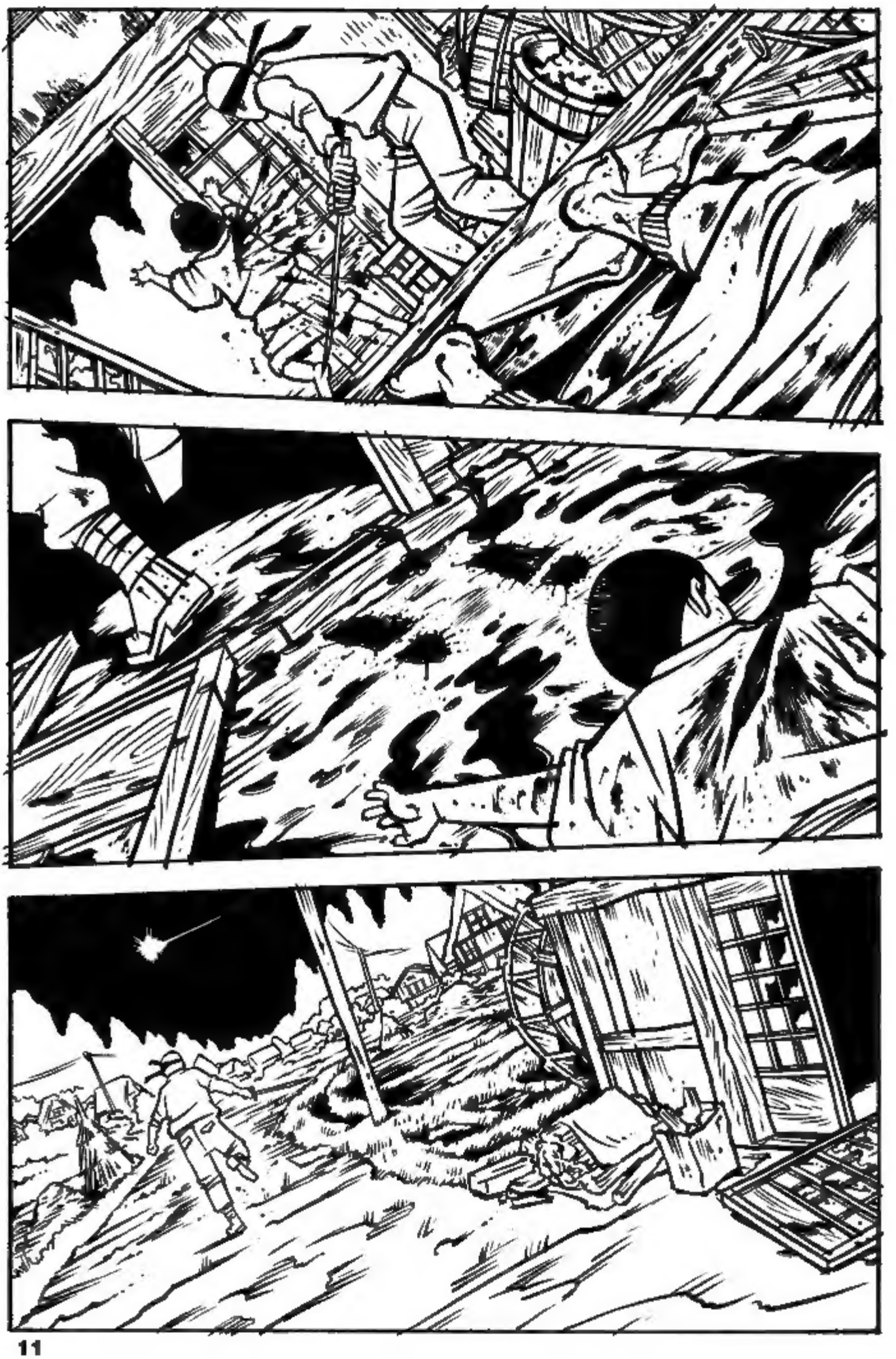

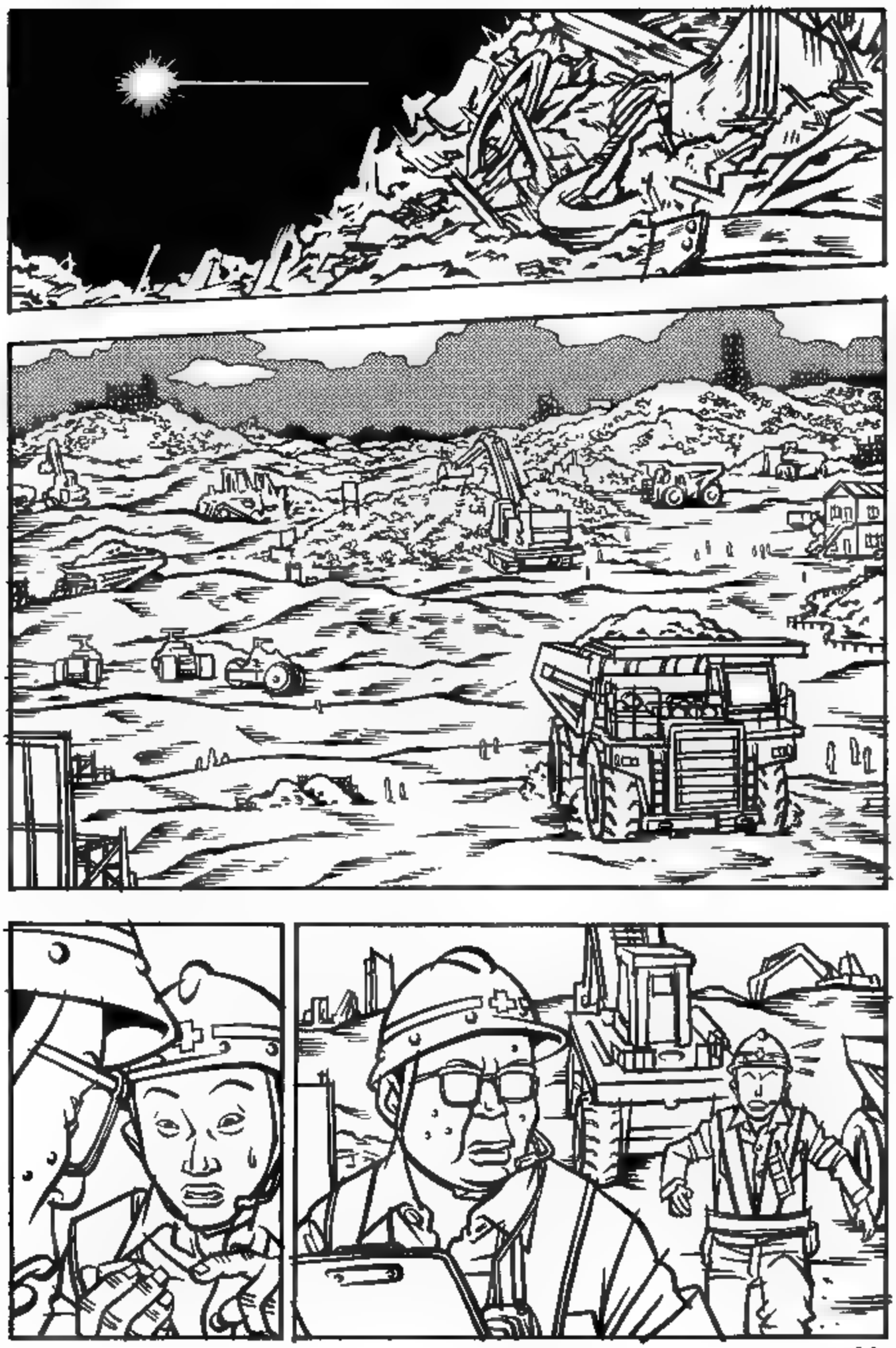

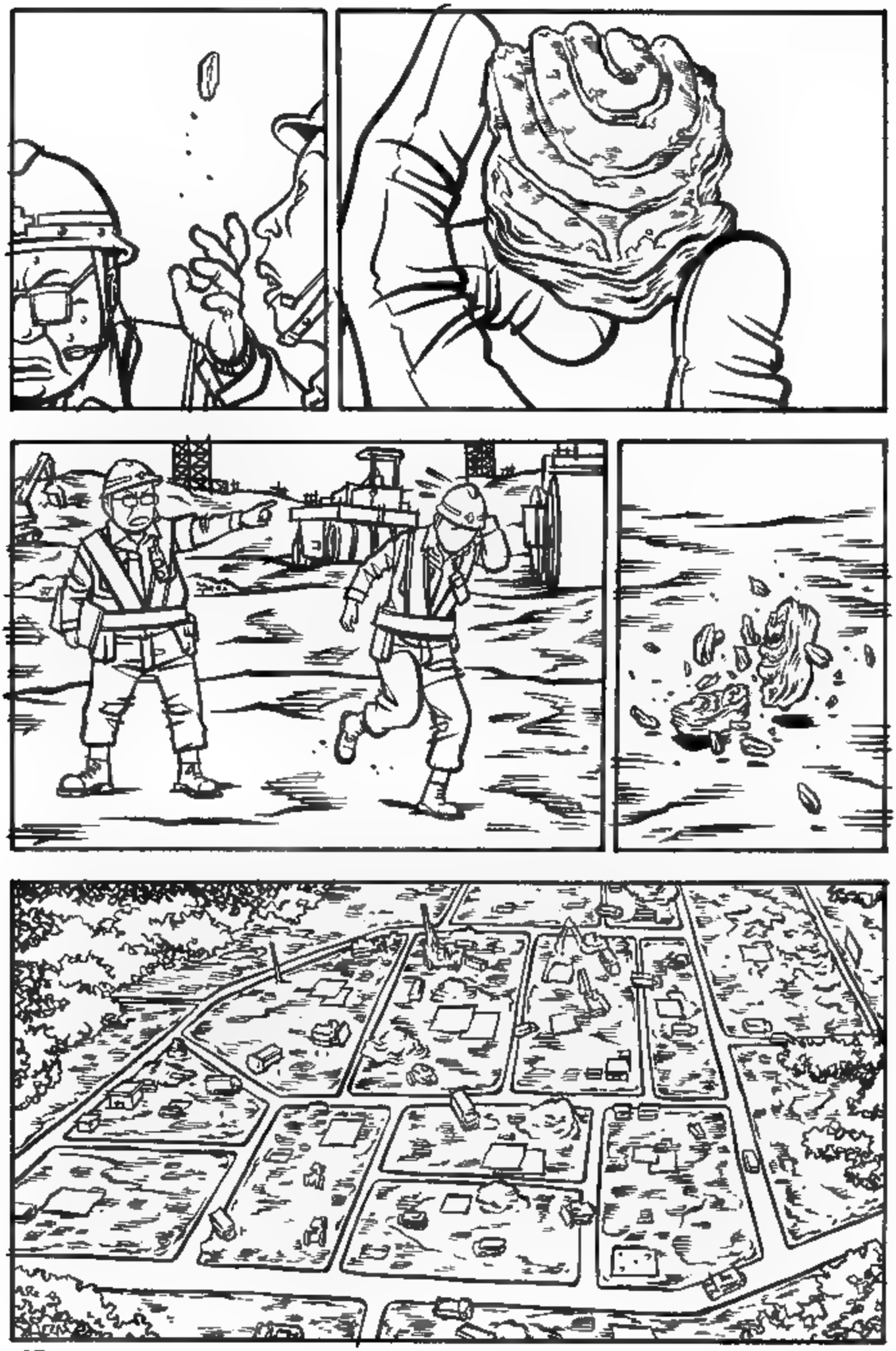

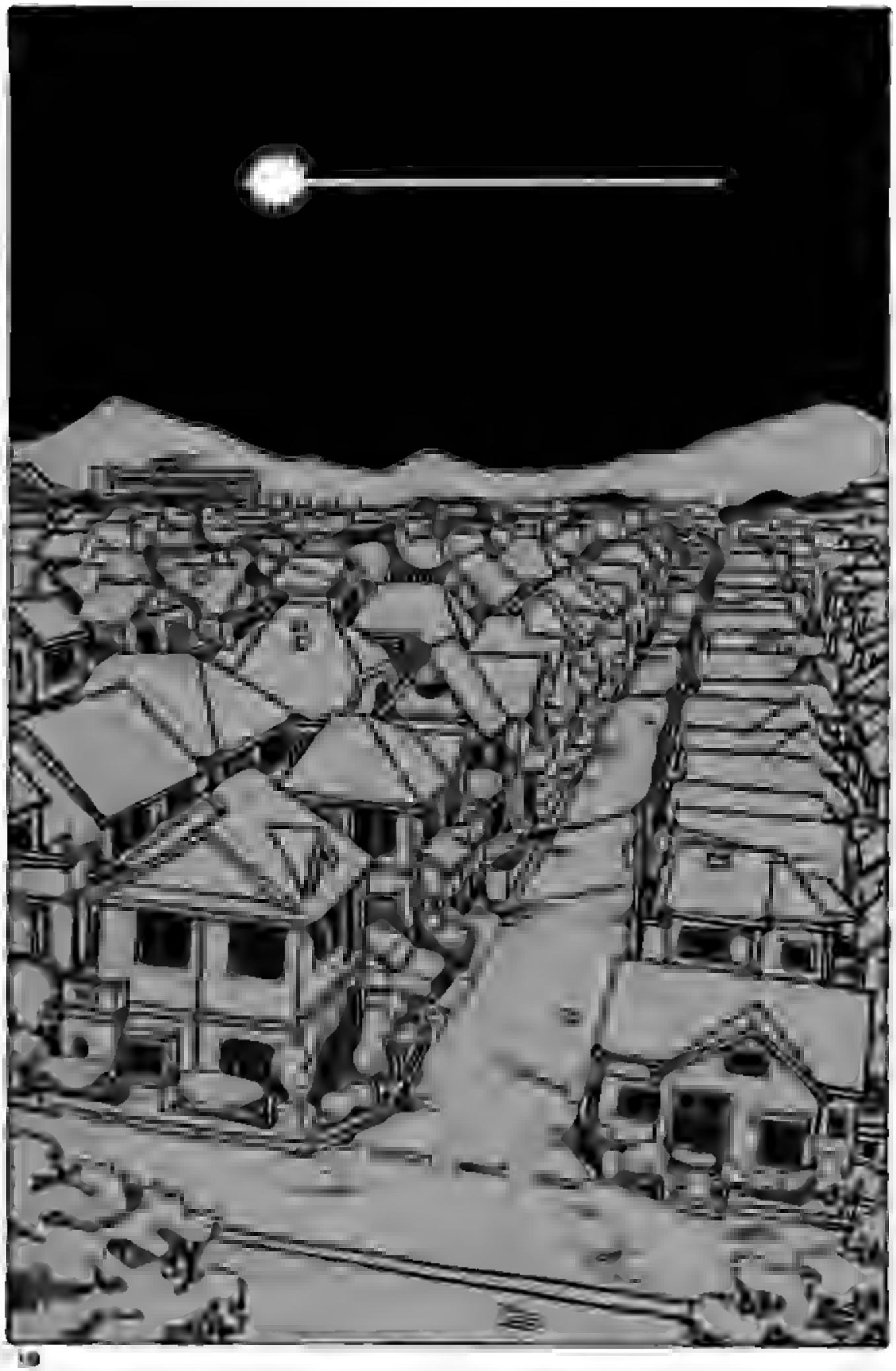

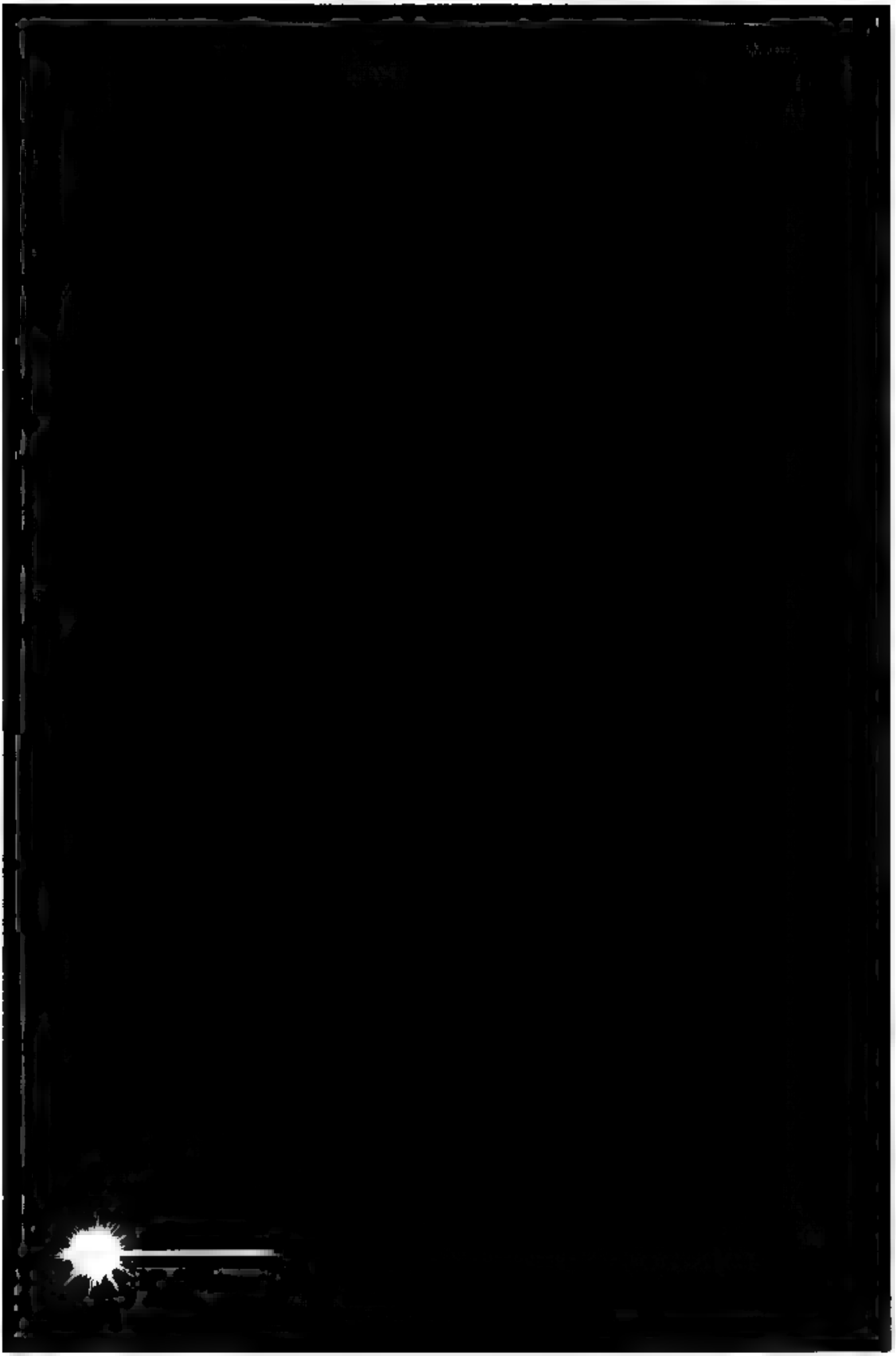

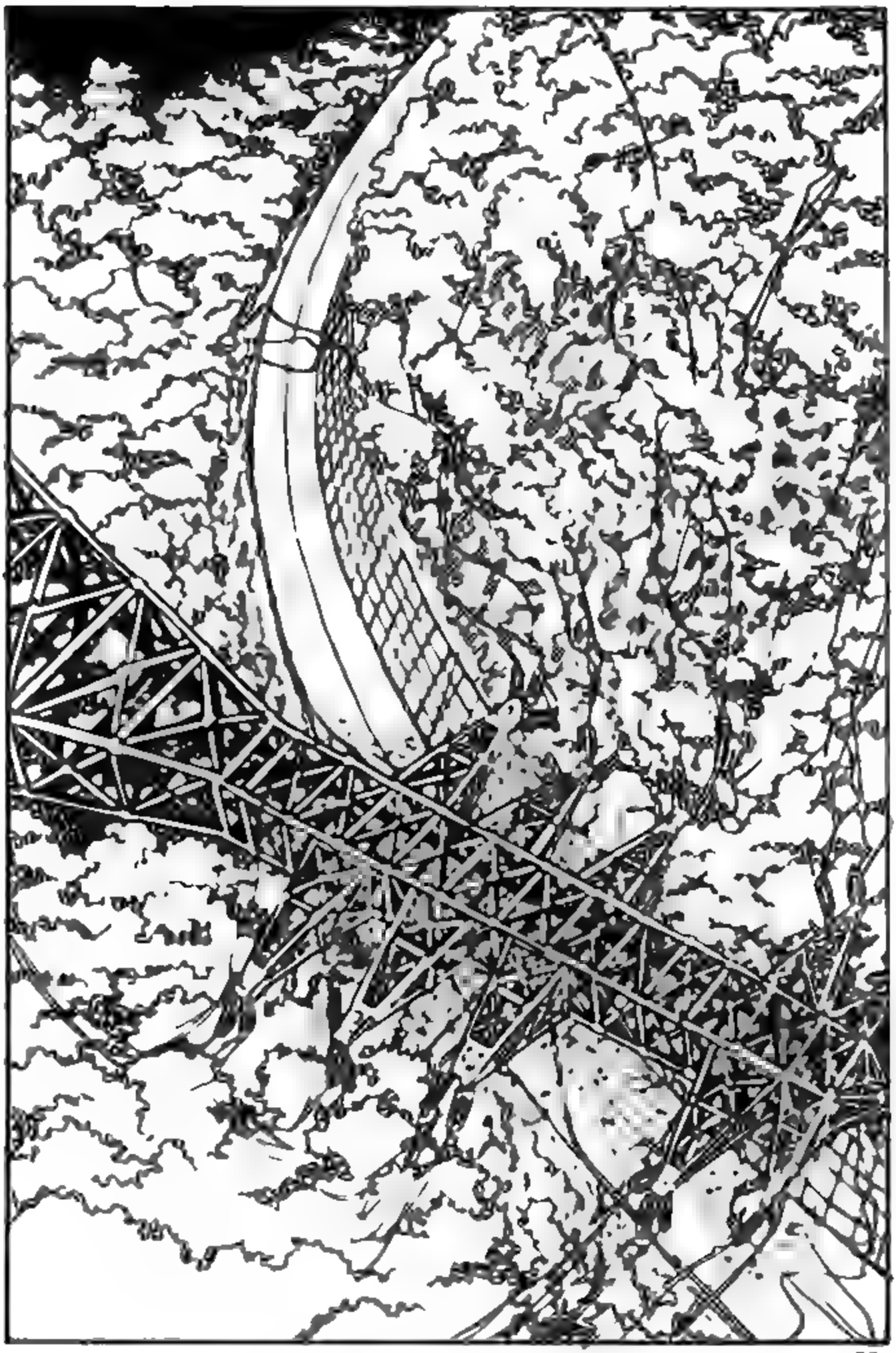

SOIL

ソイル

English version by KOTONOHA
QC by ZUBARI & ERUTAN
kotonoha.monkey-pirate.com

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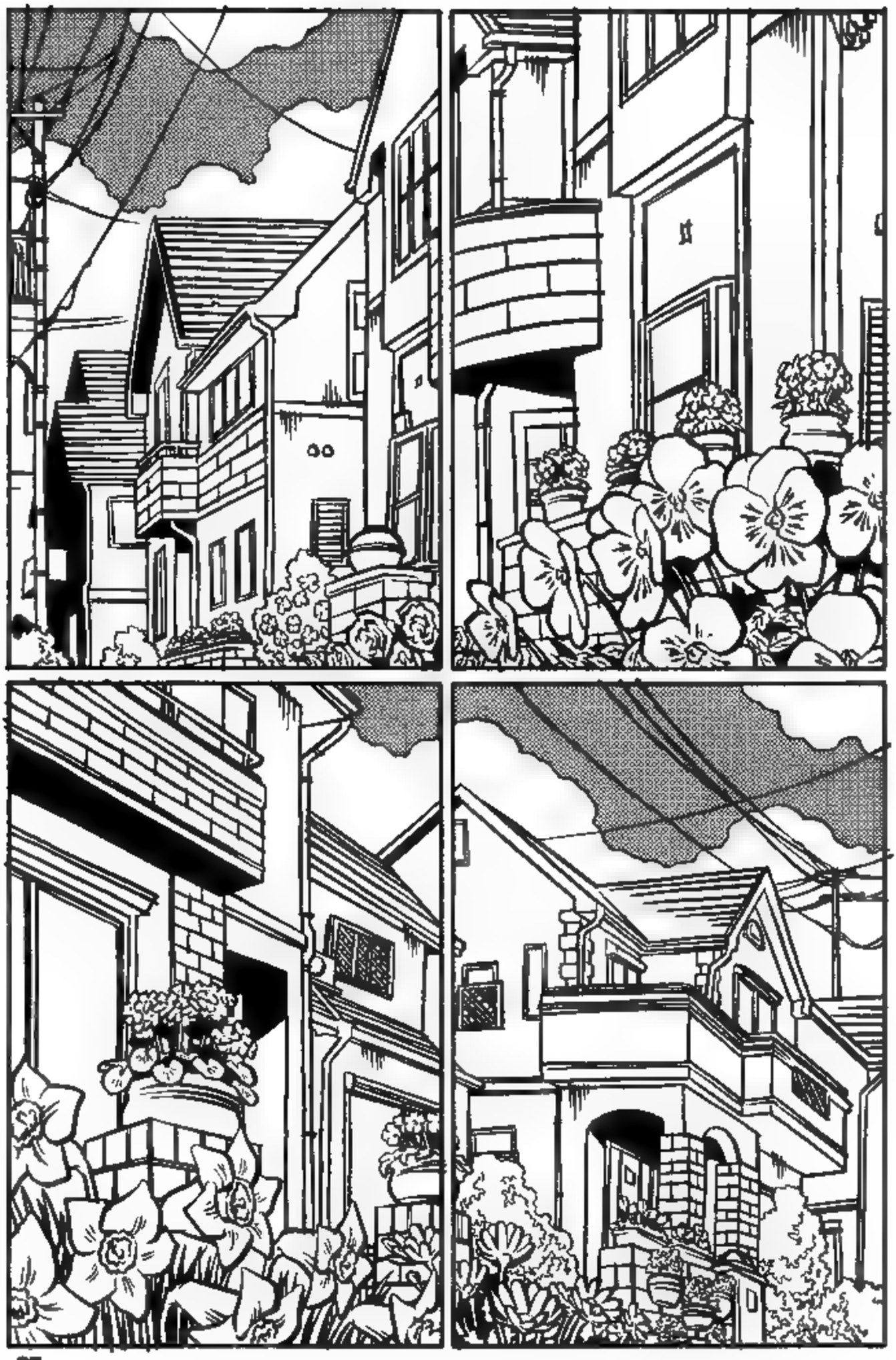
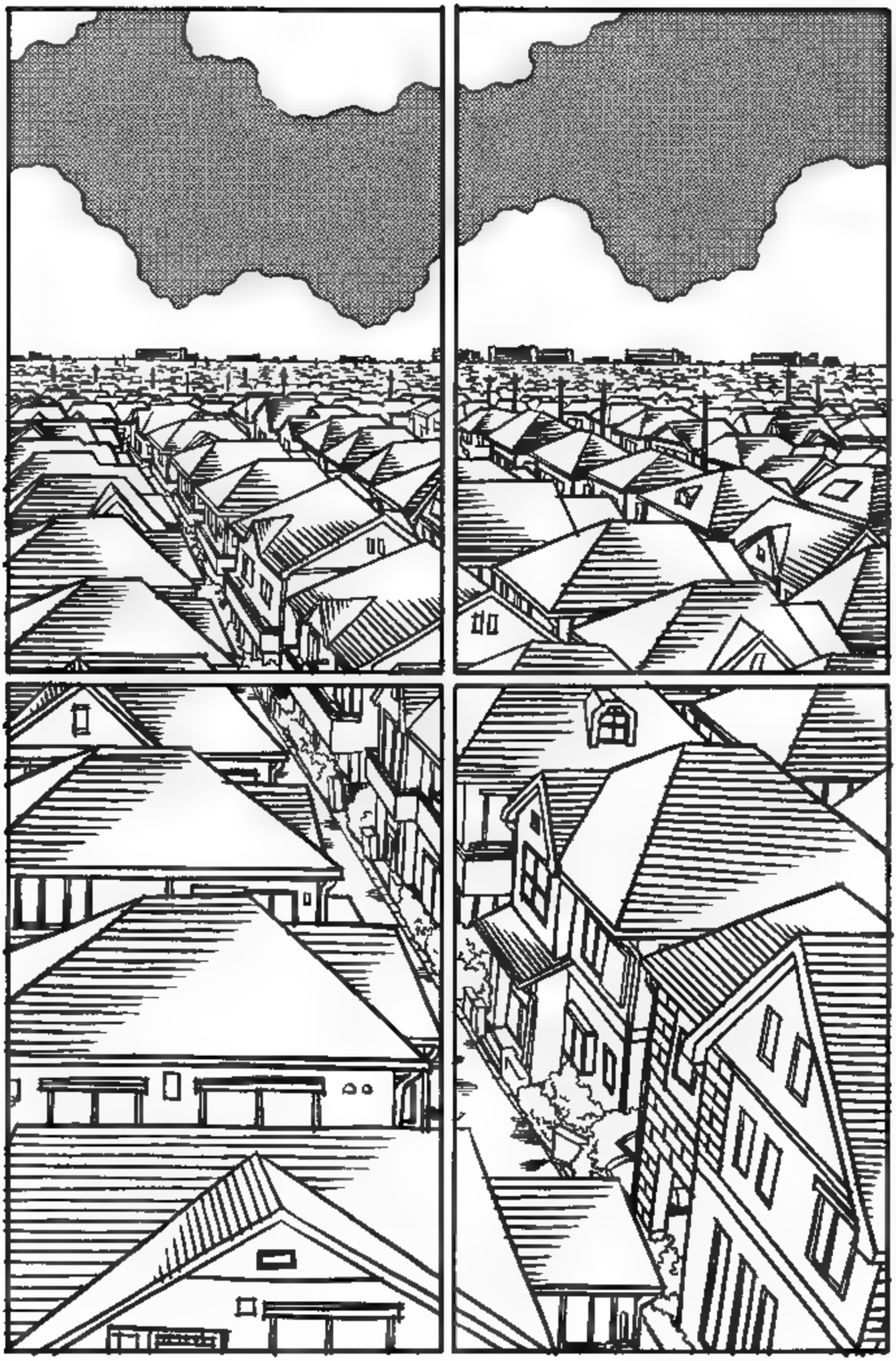
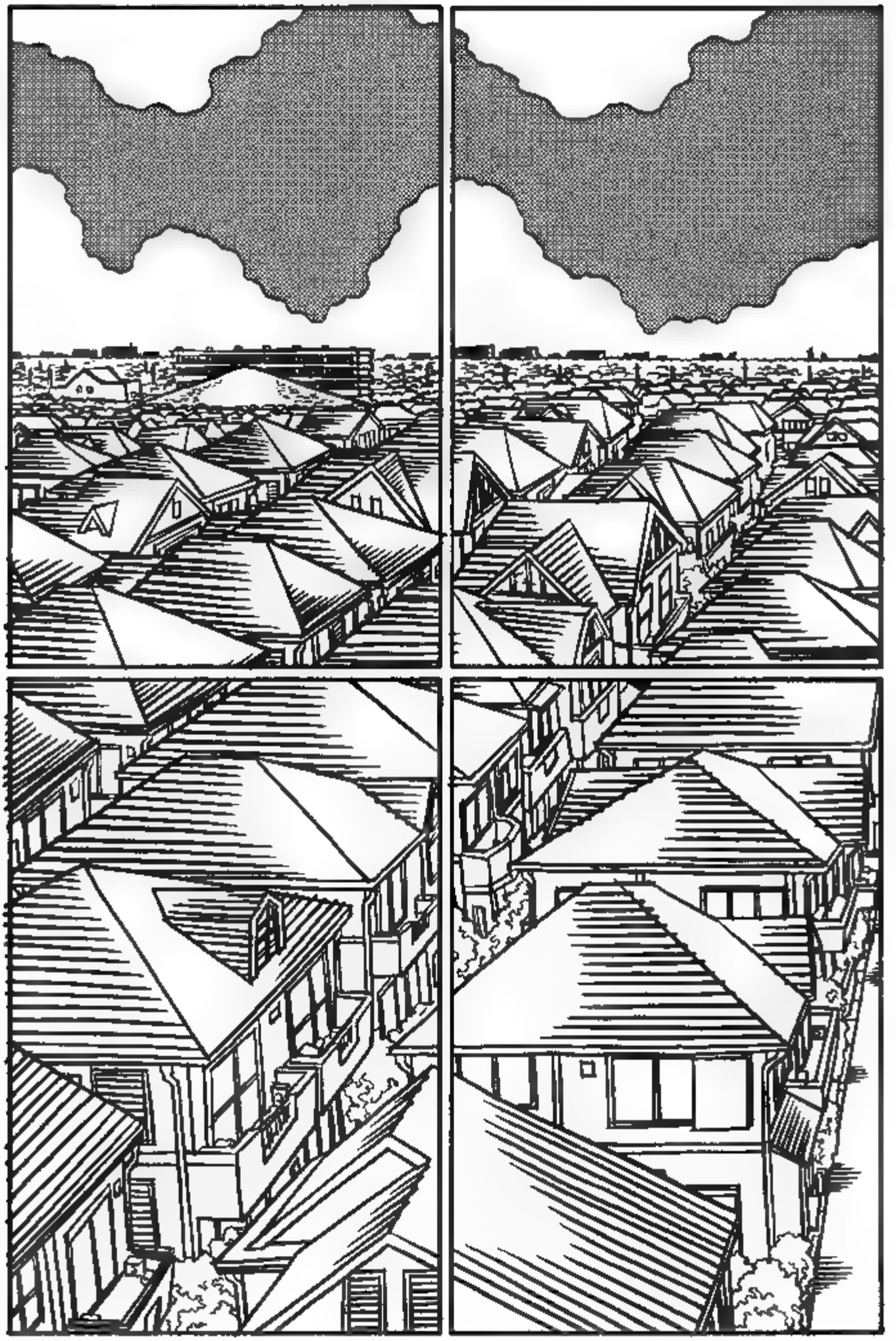
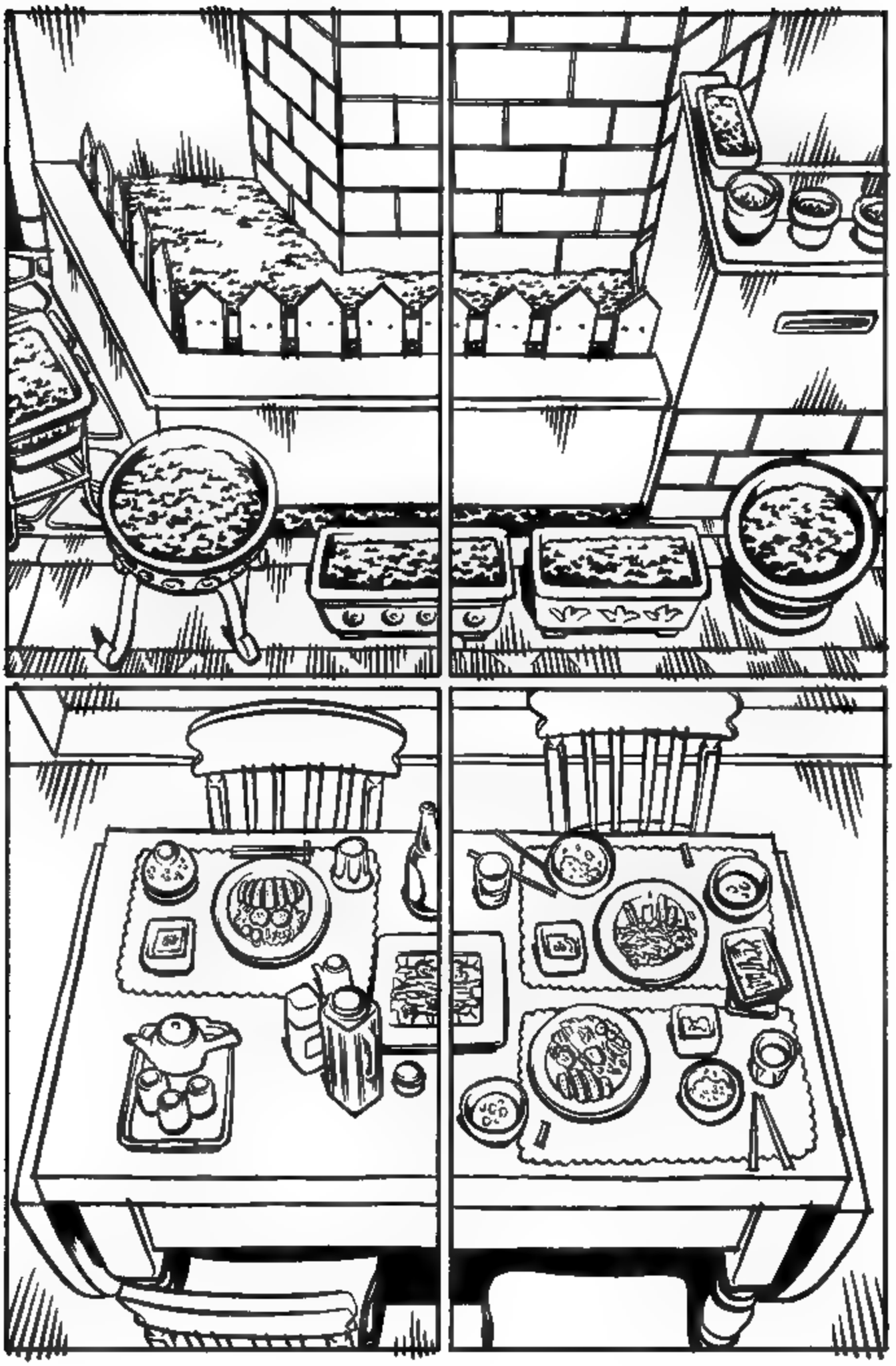
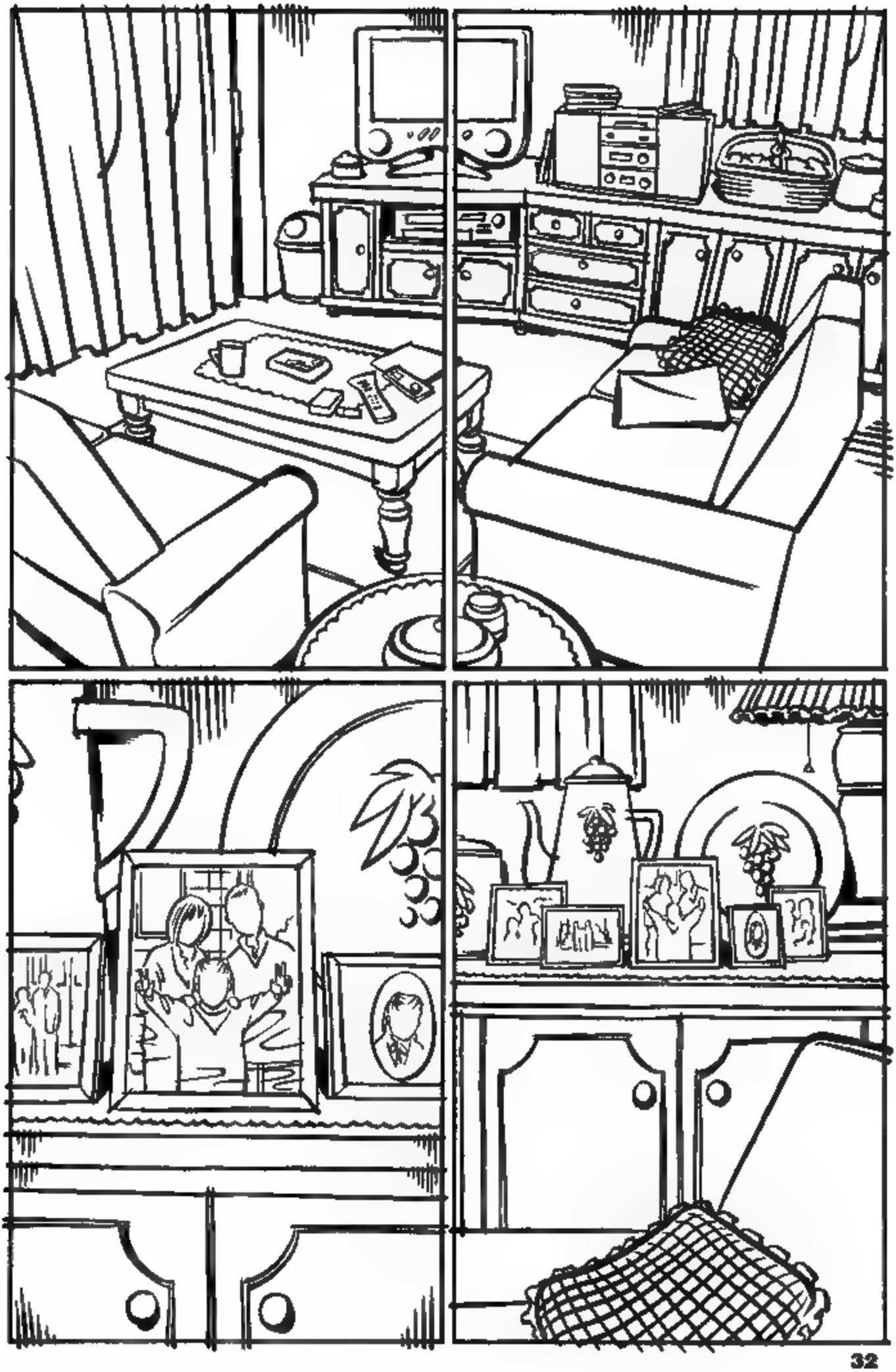






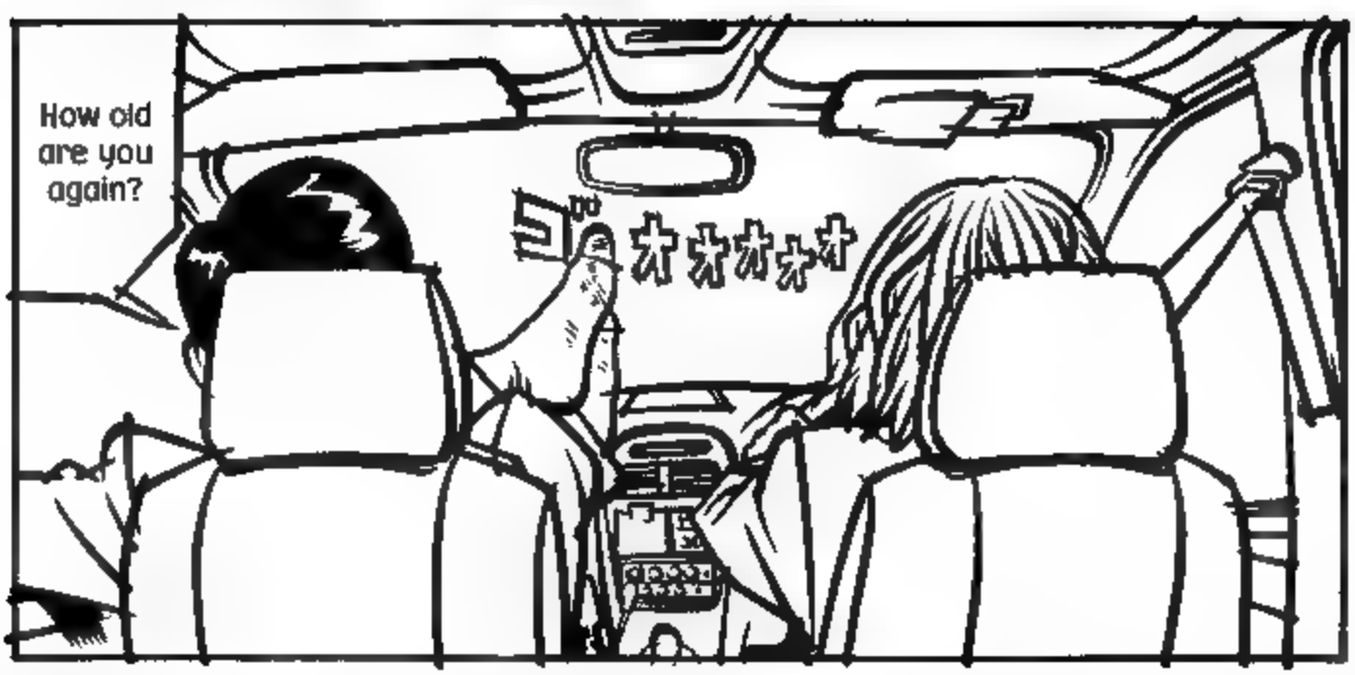




Hey, Onoda.

BLOCK 1-1

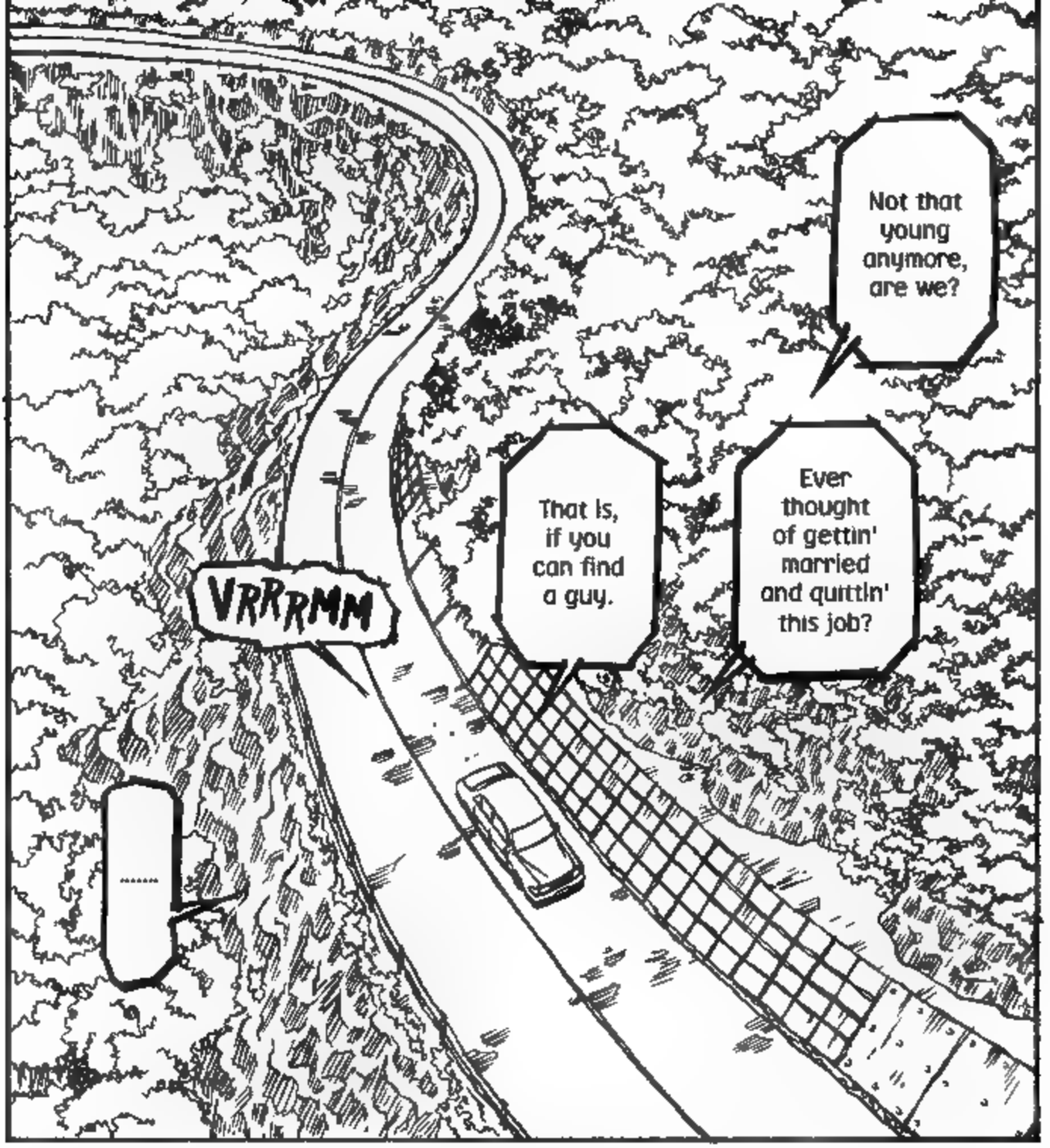
Yes, sir?



Jm, well ...

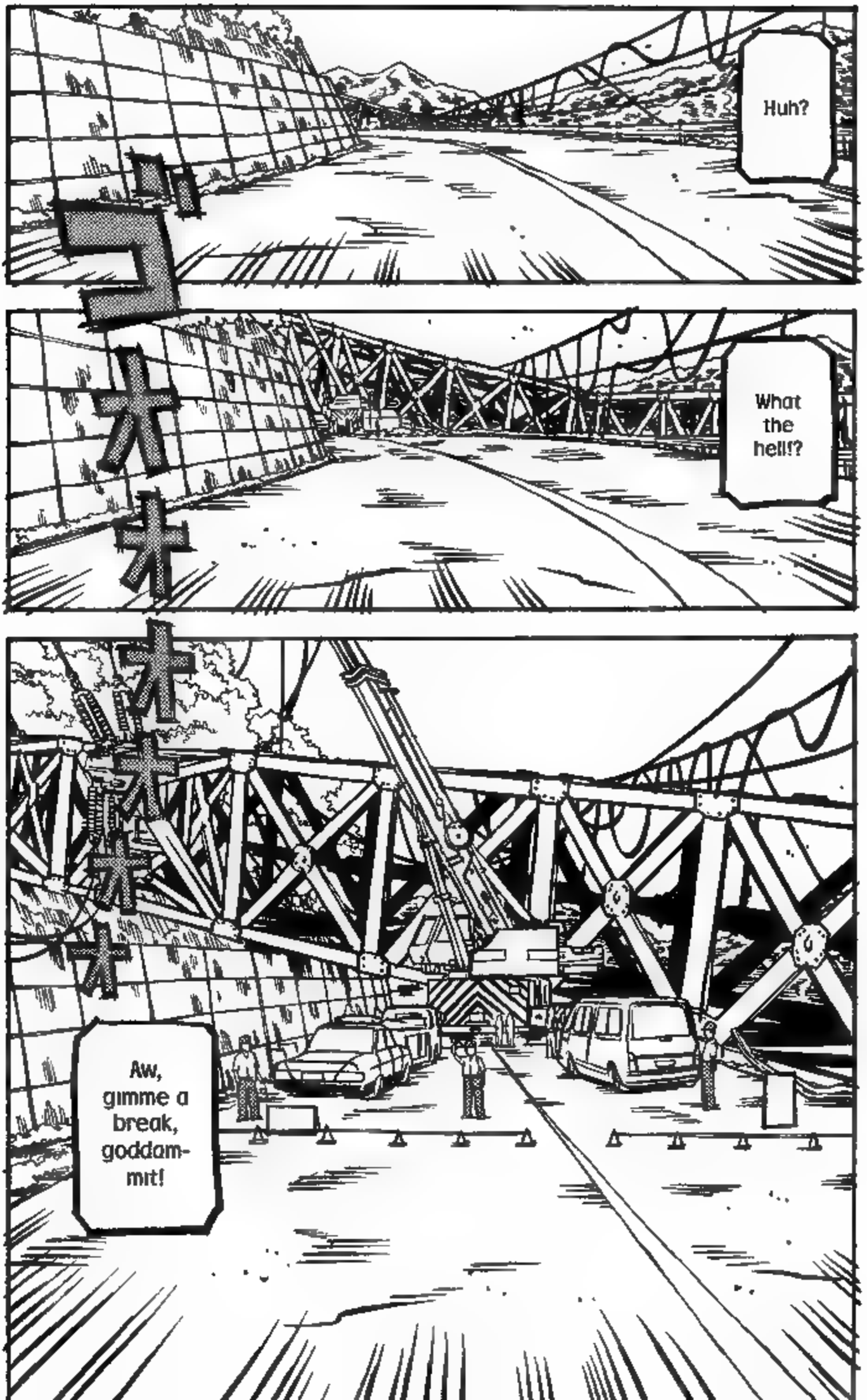
[Salt]

I'm turning 26 this year, sir.


Not that young anymore, are we?
Ever thought of gettin' married and quittin' this job?
That is, if you can find a guy.
VRRRMM
.....

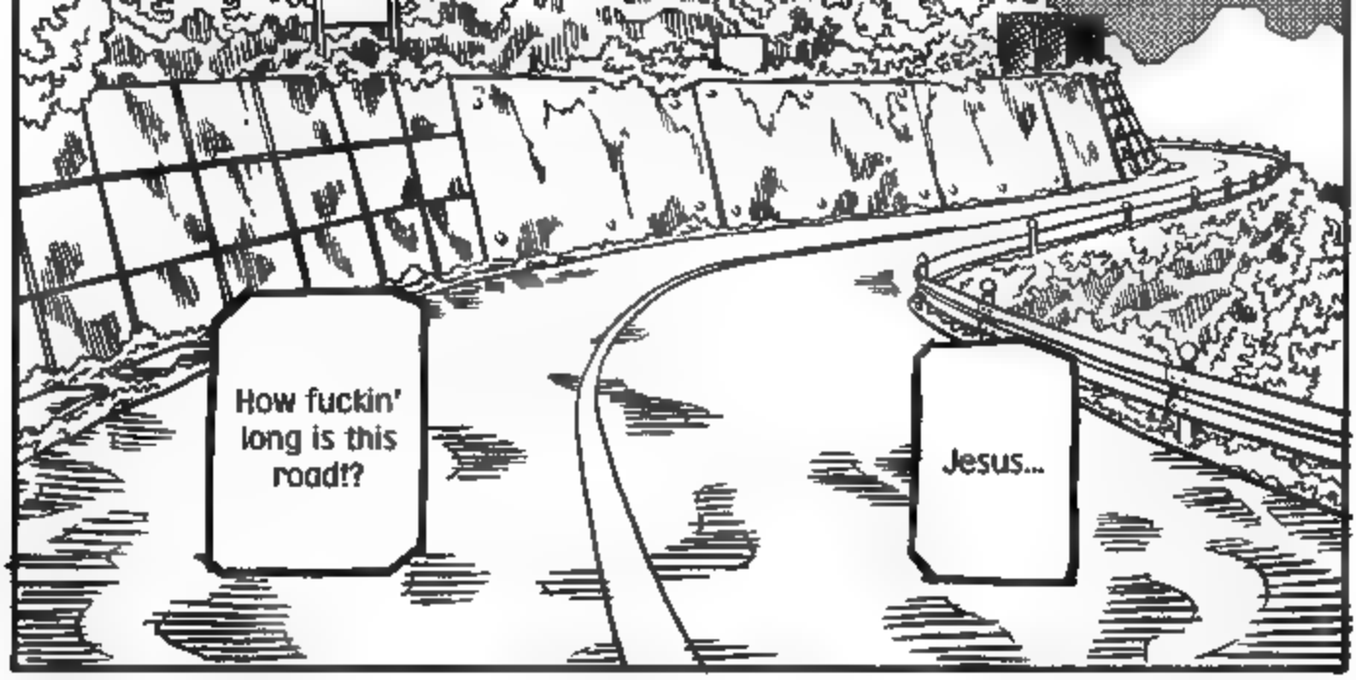
Actually no, sir There's still a lot of things I want to accomplish as a detective.
Humph !

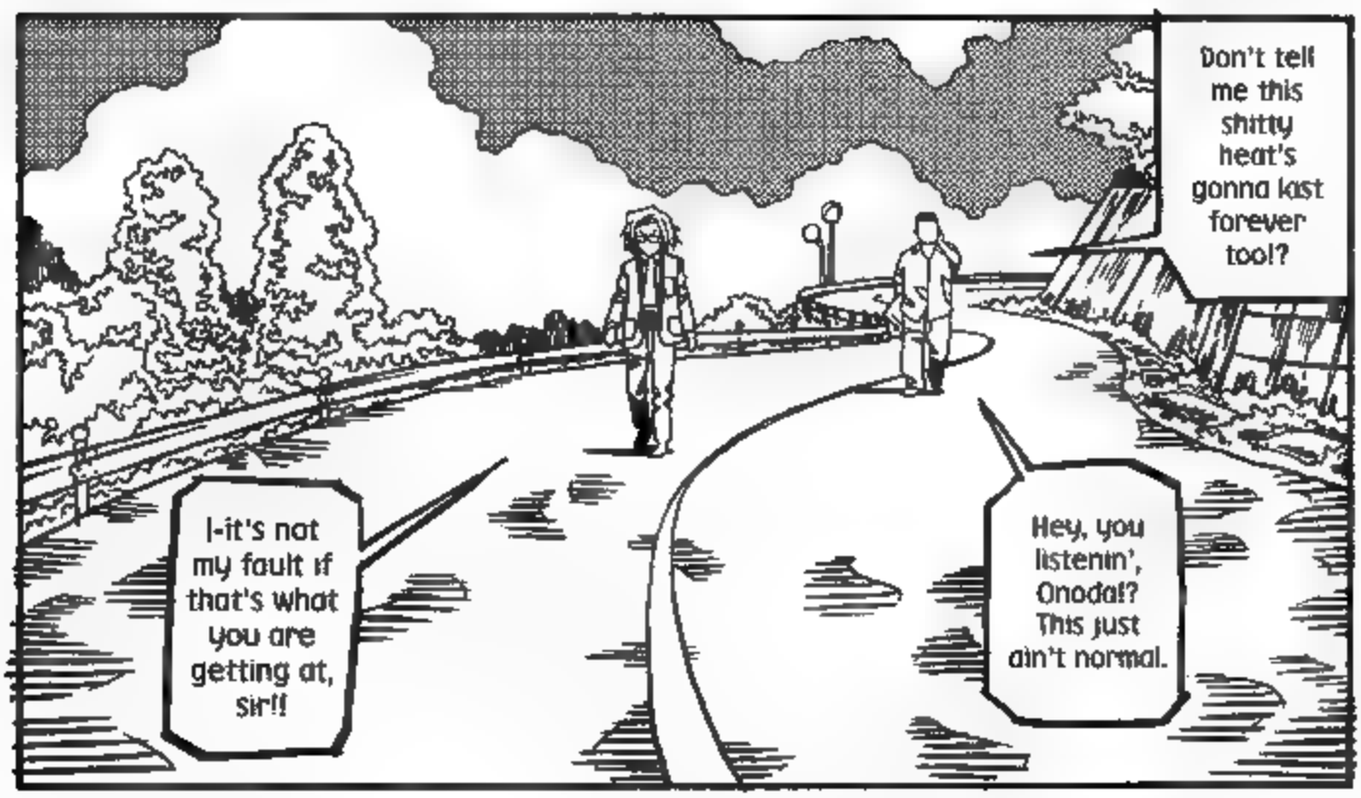
I mean, will you still be able to chase after a perp at full speed when it's your time of the month?
Could you bear to see the semen covered body of a woman who was raped and killed?
SNIFF
You got some pretty big words for a chick.
Be-besides, Sergeant Yokoi...
What you're doing is called sexual harass-ment.
SNIFF SNIFF SNIFF
Humph!
I've investi-gated two rape crime scenes before as well.
M-my periods are actually quite mild...
That's exactly what I meant with sexual harass-ment, sir.
ゴゴゴゴゴゴ
Sexual harassment!? What guy in his right mind would do an ugly bitch like ya that kind of favor?
Only in your dreams, moooron.

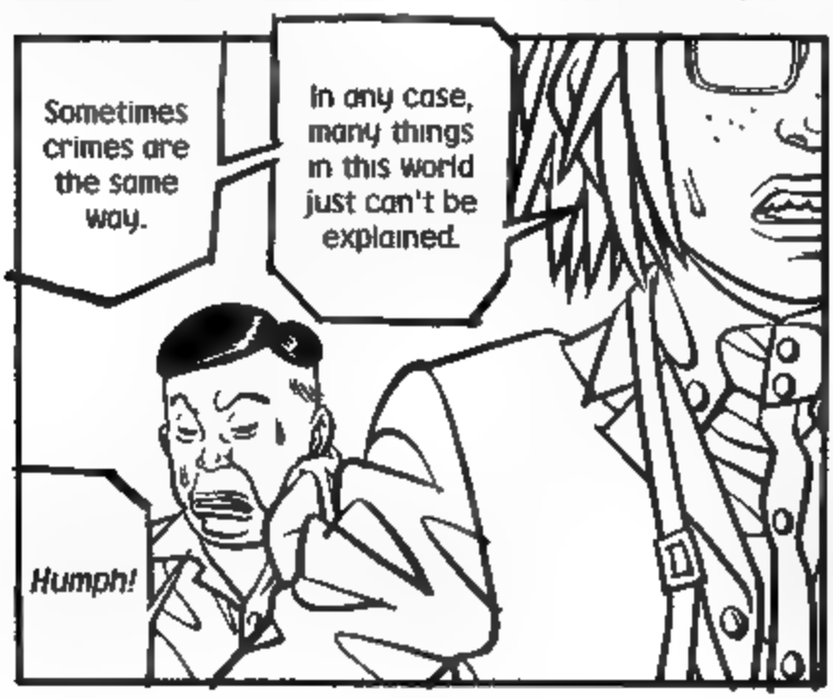

Huh?
What the hell!?
Aw, gimme a break, goddam-mit!

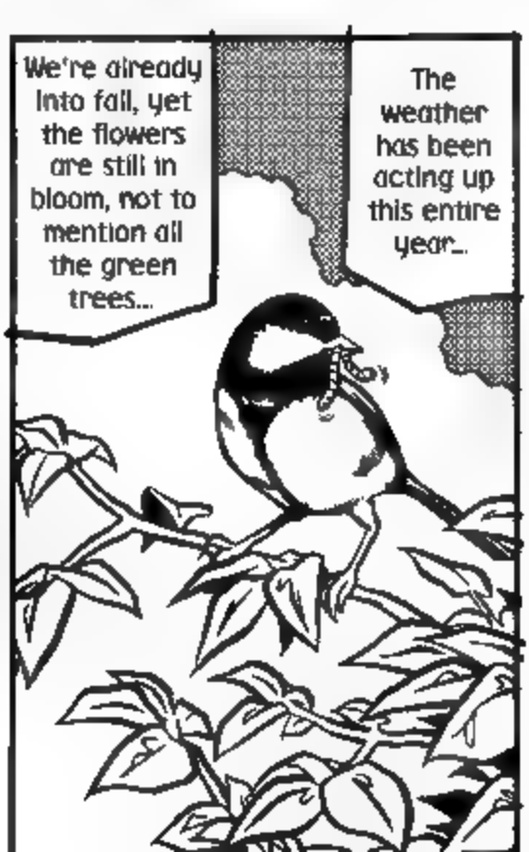
What in tarnation's going on here!?
Oh, good morning, Sergeant Yokoi.
Yesterday's power outage was caused by the collapse of this transmission tower
Somebody removed the bolts from the tower's foundations.
SNIFF SNIFF
SNIFF SNIFF
....
If this was supposed to be a prank, it's the nastiest one I've ever seen.
G-g-g-g-good m-m-morning, officer.
Good morning, Detective Onoda.

Weren't you contacted about the road closure?
I'm afraid you can't drive your car past this point.
LOOK
LOOK
LOOK
What the fuck should we do now, eh!?
Ouch!
But sir, you were the one who said we should take the prefectural road!
Huh? Nobody contacted me about that!
In this heat? You gotta be fuckin' kiddin' me.
It can't be helped, sir May I suggest that we walk from here?
Jeez, this is why you shouldn't let a woman take the wheel.
Huh, huh ...
Hmm, hmm ...


How fuckin' long is this road!?
Jesus...


Don't tell me this shitty heat's gonna last forever too!?
I-it's not my fault if that's what you are getting at, sir!!
Hey, you listenin', Onoda!? This just ain't normal.


Sometimes crimes are the same way.
In any case, many things in this world just can't be explained.
Humph!


We're already into fall, yet the flowers are still in bloom, not to mention all the green trees...
The weather has been acting up this entire year...

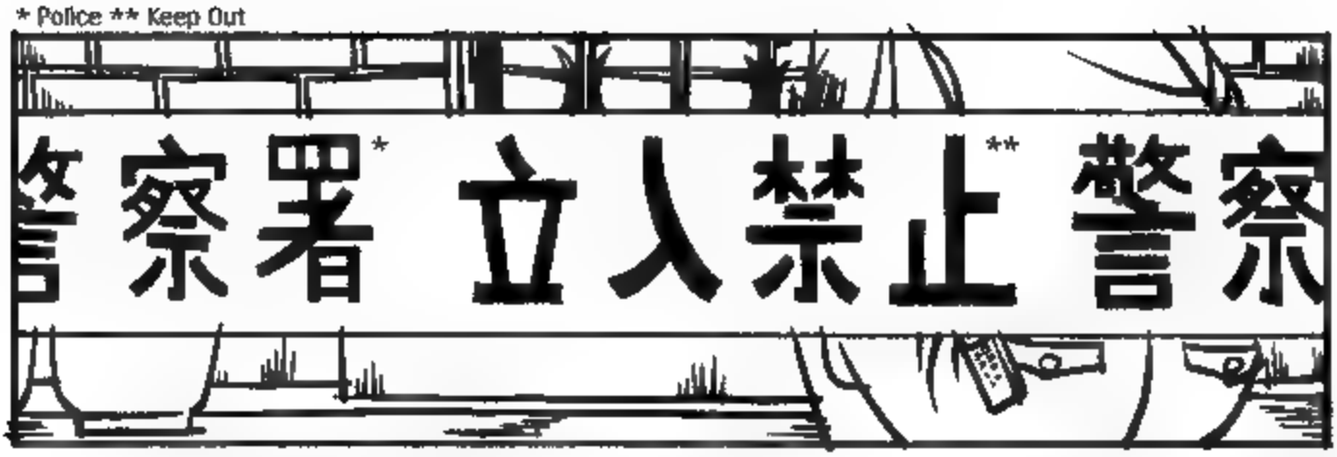
So what! Who told ya you're supposed to understand everything?
If you bust their asses, you're done with the damn job.
B-but sir, I *am* an investigator!
I *have* to understand every aspect of a case in order to solve it.
Things we don't get ain't our shit to worry about!
WIPE
WIPE
God, this feels like the Black Hole of Calcutta, and you...

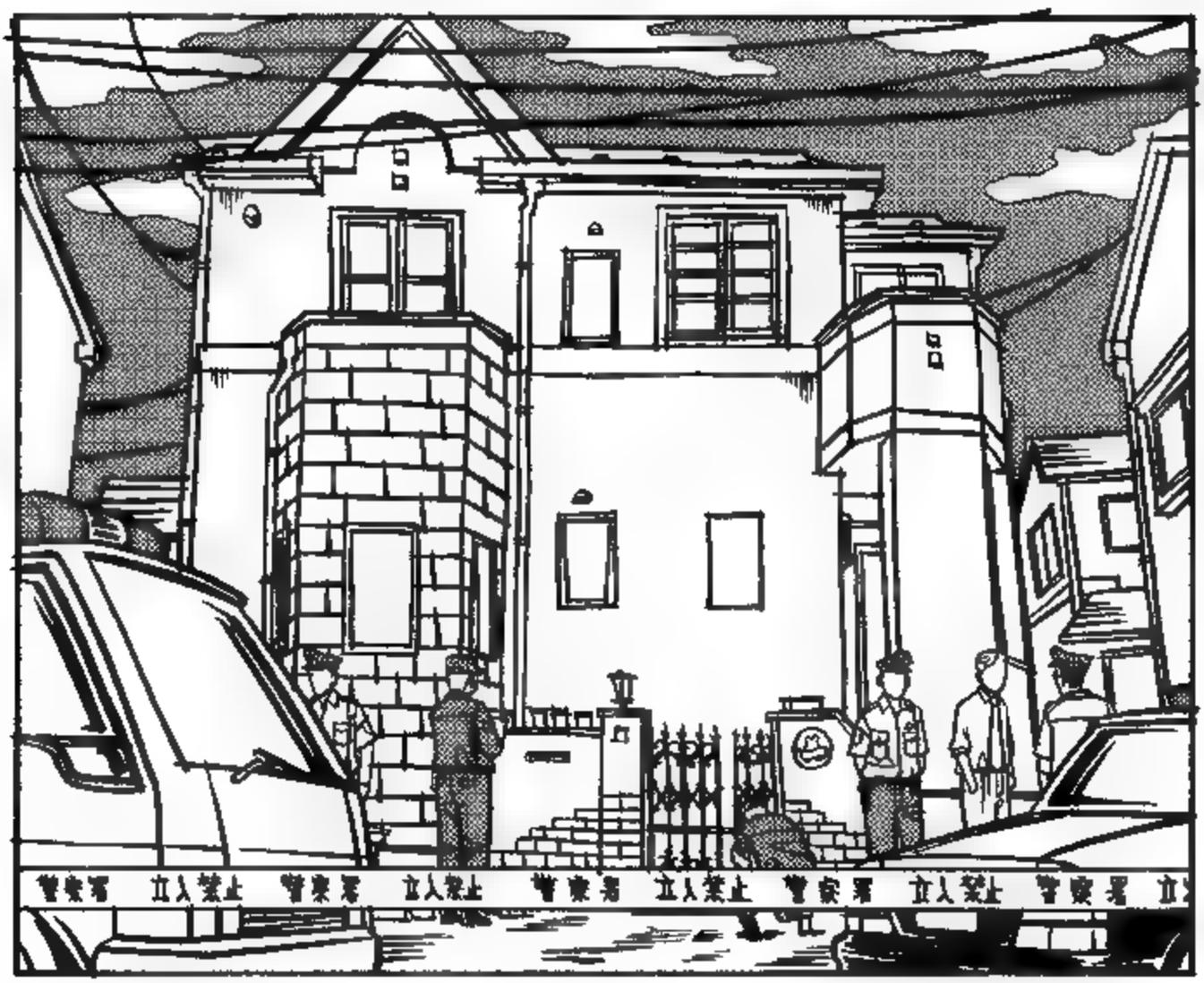
Hah, don't overstrain your little tushie in these boonies, y'hear me.

What the fuck are you staring at?
No- nothing, sir-

"Soil New Town."
Oh, there it is!

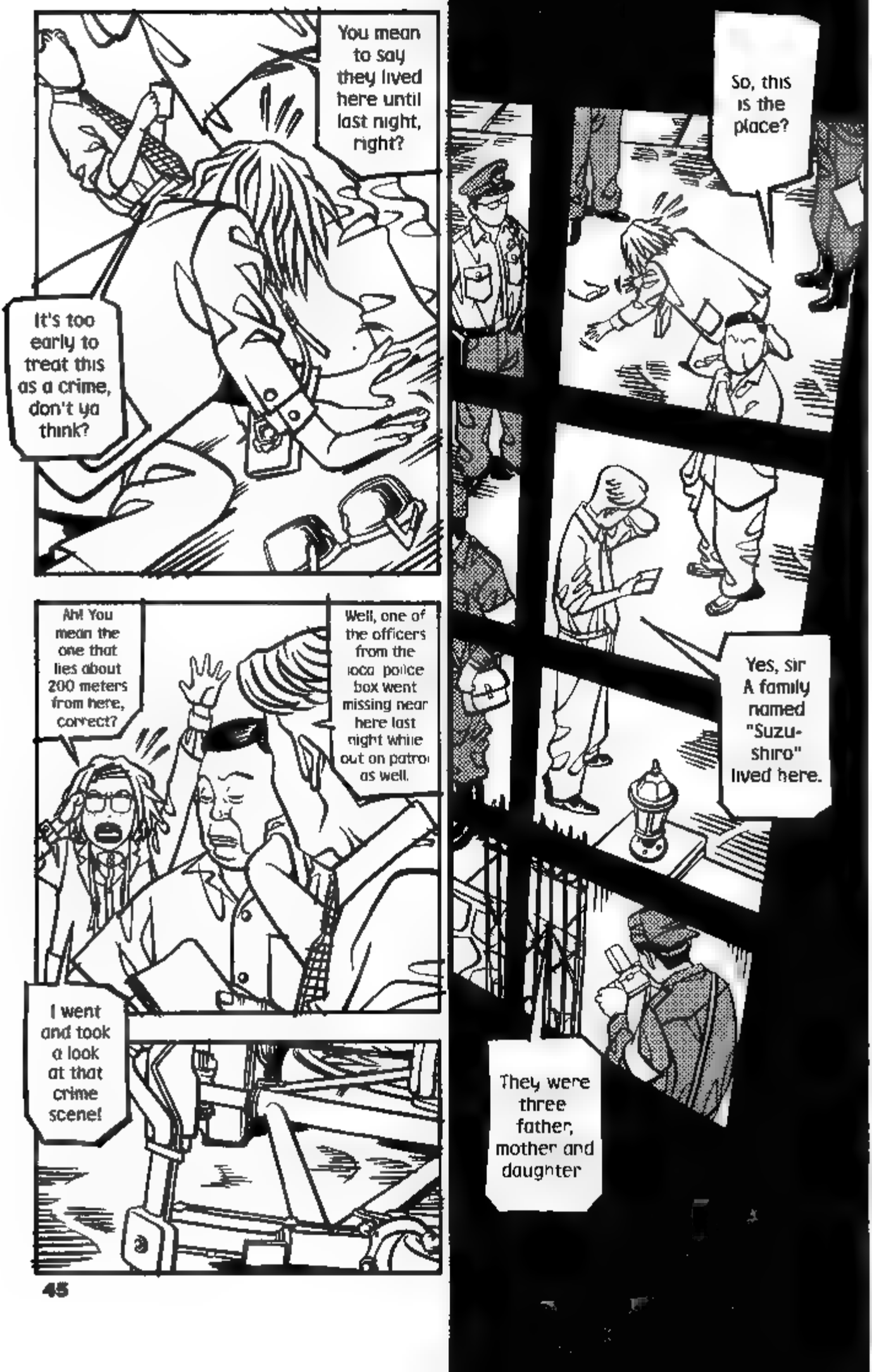
* Police ** Keep Out





*** Kamikawa PD

The damn road was closed, that's why.
You don't say, smart ass.
Mr. Yokoi, Ms. Onoda, you two are late!
What? You took the prefectural road?
Didn't I tell you to avoid that route this morning?
You did!?
.....
I can't believe someone like you is a detective!
Stop being so friggin' shy, would ya!
Ouch!
Good morning, Detective Onoda.
Ah, g-g-g-g-g-good m-m-morn...


So, this is the place?
Yes, sir A family named "Suzu-shiro" lived here.
They were three father, mother and daughter
You mean to say they lived here until last night, right?
It's too early to treat this as a crime, don't ya think?
Ah! You mean the one that lies about 200 meters from here, correct?
Well, one of the officers from the local police box went missing near here last night while out on patrol as well.
I went and took a look at that crime scene!

His patrol bicycle was found abandoned in the middle of the street on the way here!

The bicycle itself is undamaged; and so far, no suspicious material has been found in the immediate vicinity!

Sir, please take a look inside the house.

There's definitely something weird about this case.

And that's related to this family's disappearance how?

SNIFF

SNIFF

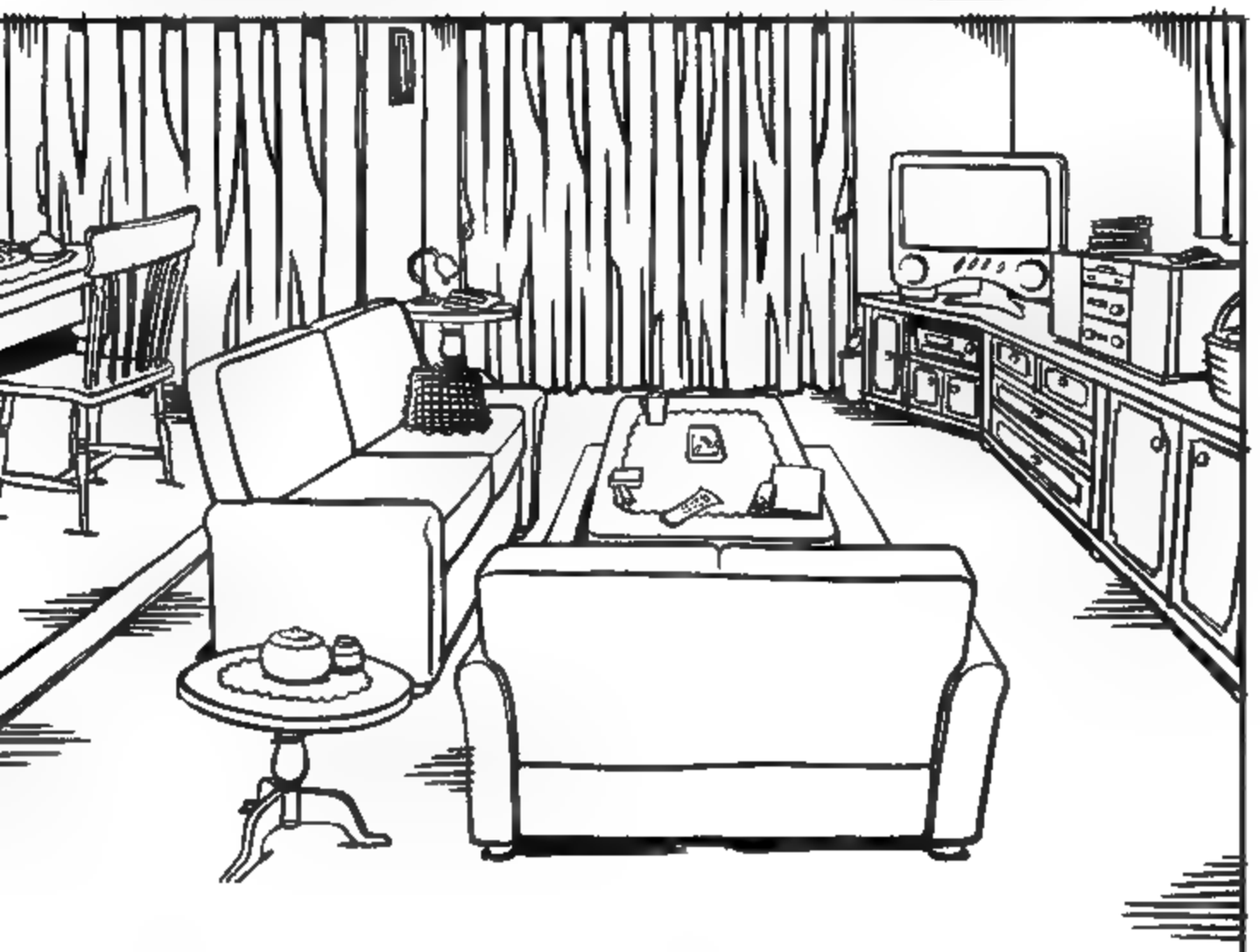
Are we supposed to look for every person who don't sleep in his own bed for one night now!?

Mr. Tamura! Please wait!

I don't quite understand it myself...

You still have some food particles around your mouth!
Please wipe them off before entering the scene!

All looks and no brains...
Jeez, this guy's too much for me...



All the entrances on the first floor were locked!
There are no signs of robbery in this room!
Are you kiddin' me? *This* is supposed to be a crime scene?
The television and the air conditioner are still on!
There are unfinished meals on the dining table!
HALT
This must be the daughter's dish.
It seems to be the only one that was untouched.
All this looks like "life-as-usual" to me.
So what do you think?
CLACK

...while they were dining happily together.

It seems almost as if this family just vanished into thin air...

Hah

Hah

Hah

This really seems to be a picture-book family.

I can't imagine what could've happened to them...

RUB

RUB

RUB

RUB

...but I can't catch on to this "honest citizen" shit.

SNIFF

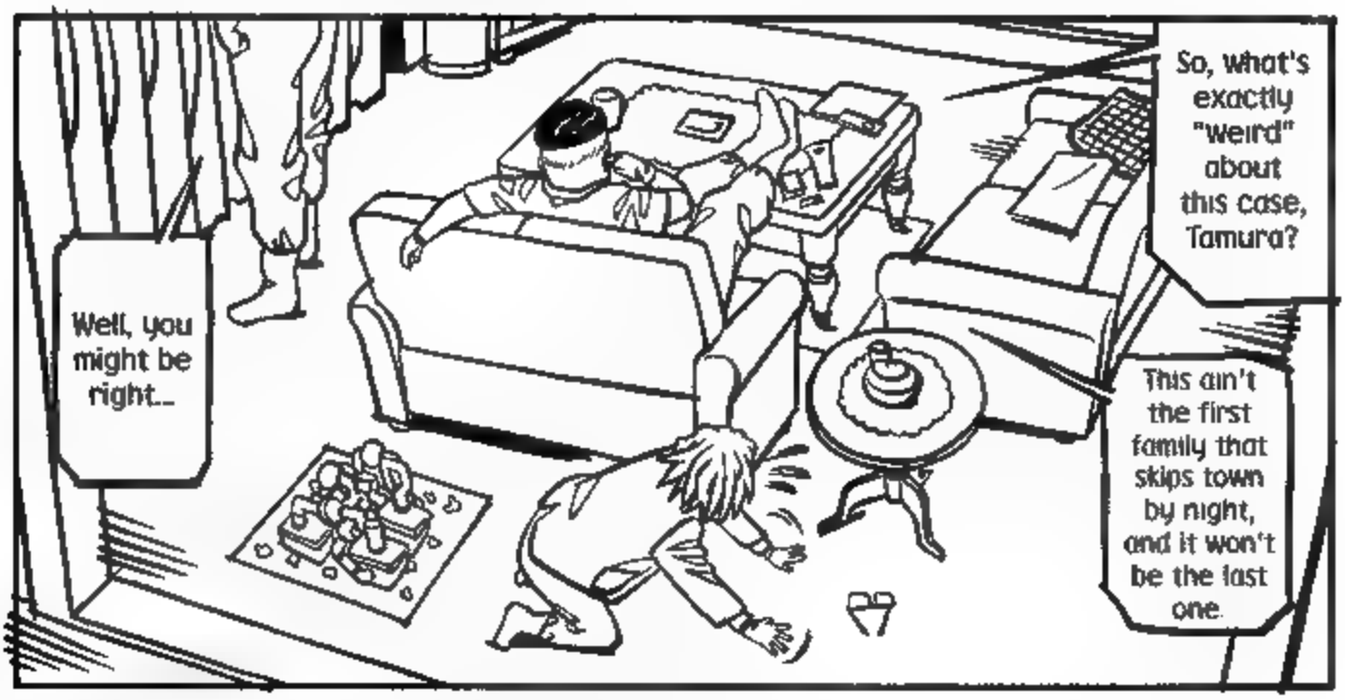
SNIFF

If they were mobsters, one look at their mugs would tell me pretty much everything...

You used to deal with OC in your old days, didn't you, sarge?

"Picture-book," eh.
.....
Oh, sorry.
I was just... Never mind.
Detective Tamura! What's this noise that you're making!?
Hah
Hah
Hah
This must be some sort of laboratory instrument.
I've just discovered a suspicious object!
Sir!
What's this!?

We didn't find a hamster in this house though.
Ouch!
It's a ham-ster's cage, moron!


So, what's exactly "weird" about this case, Tamura?
Well, you might be right...
This ain't the first family that skips town by night, and it won't be the last one.

But there's something in the daughter's room on the second floor.
.. that I just can't make any sense of.

I-it seems to be some sort of crystal...
W-w-w-w-w-what could this be!?
S-sir!
LICY
As long as we don't know what it is you shouldn't...
See? I told you there was something weird going on here.
Salt, you said?
But why would someone bring such thing here?
What ?
S-salt?
It's just salt.

Is this supposed to be some kind of message?
If so, is there a meaning to this peculiar shape? Or just the "salt" itself?
What exactly happened to this family last night? Where have they disappeared to?
Was it a kidnapping? Imprisonment? Murder? Where are the corpses?
What did the perpetrator try to point out with this "salt"?

Hah

CLUNK

CLUNK

Hah

Hah

CLUNK

Well, it ain't no good luck charm, that's for sure.

PTUI

PTUI

Oh, you mean Officer Katakuri?

Where's the guy who reported this anyway?

He was called to the junior high school a while ago...

Hah!

Hah!

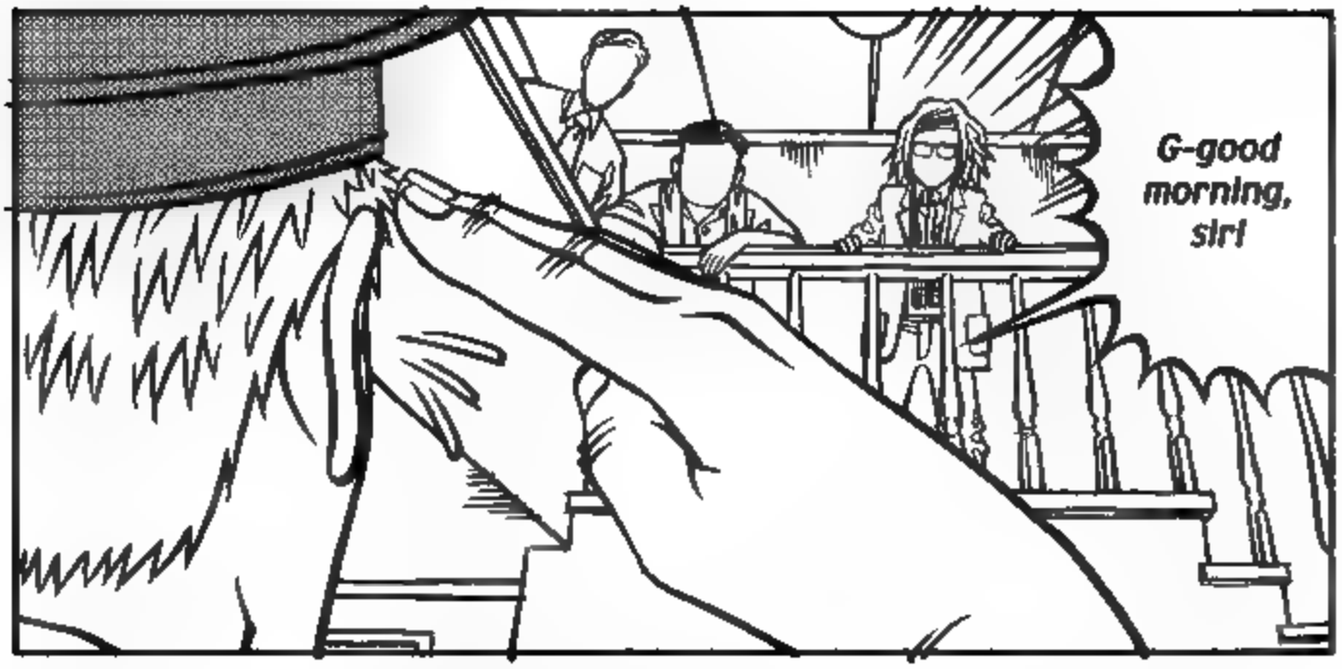
Hah!

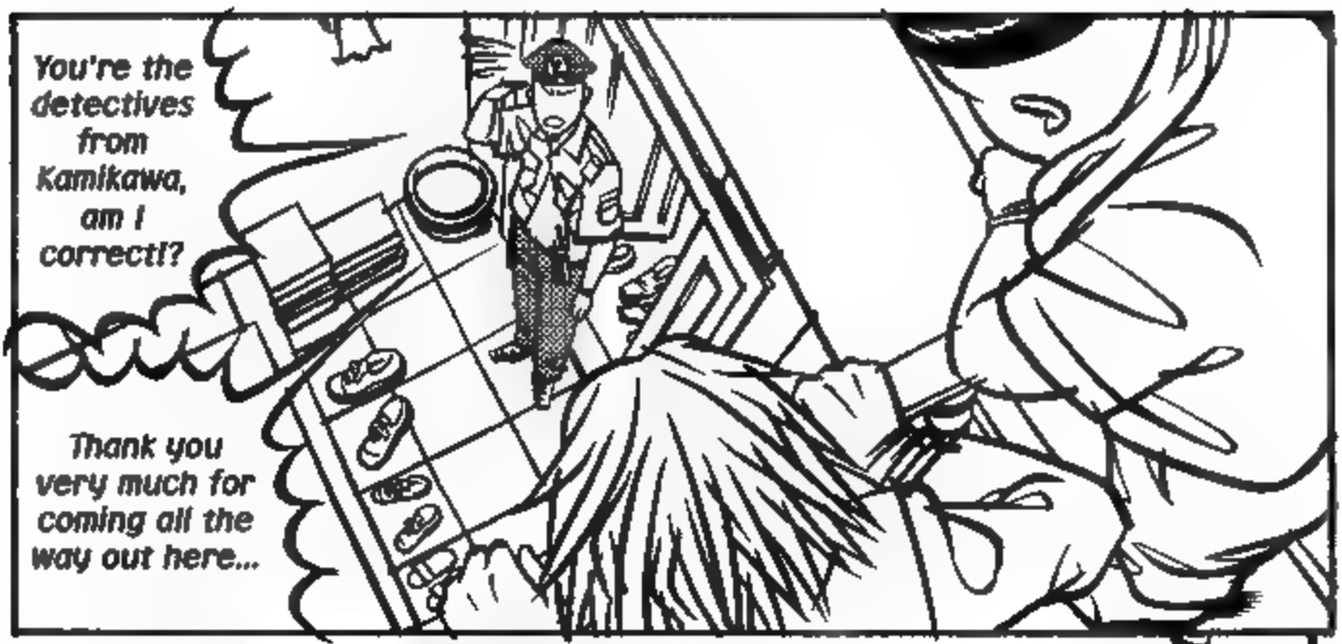
Hah!

Junior high school ...?

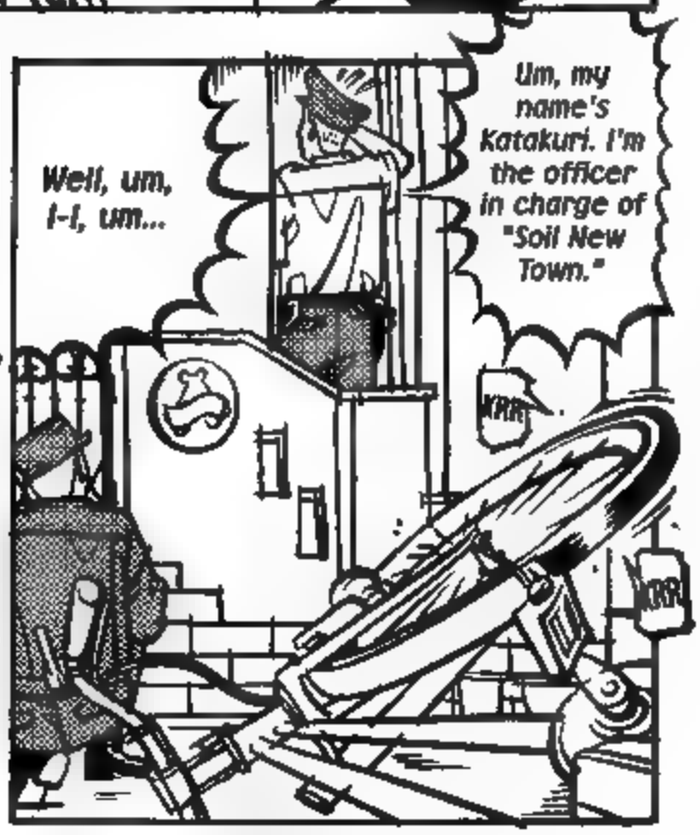
HAHAHAHAHA

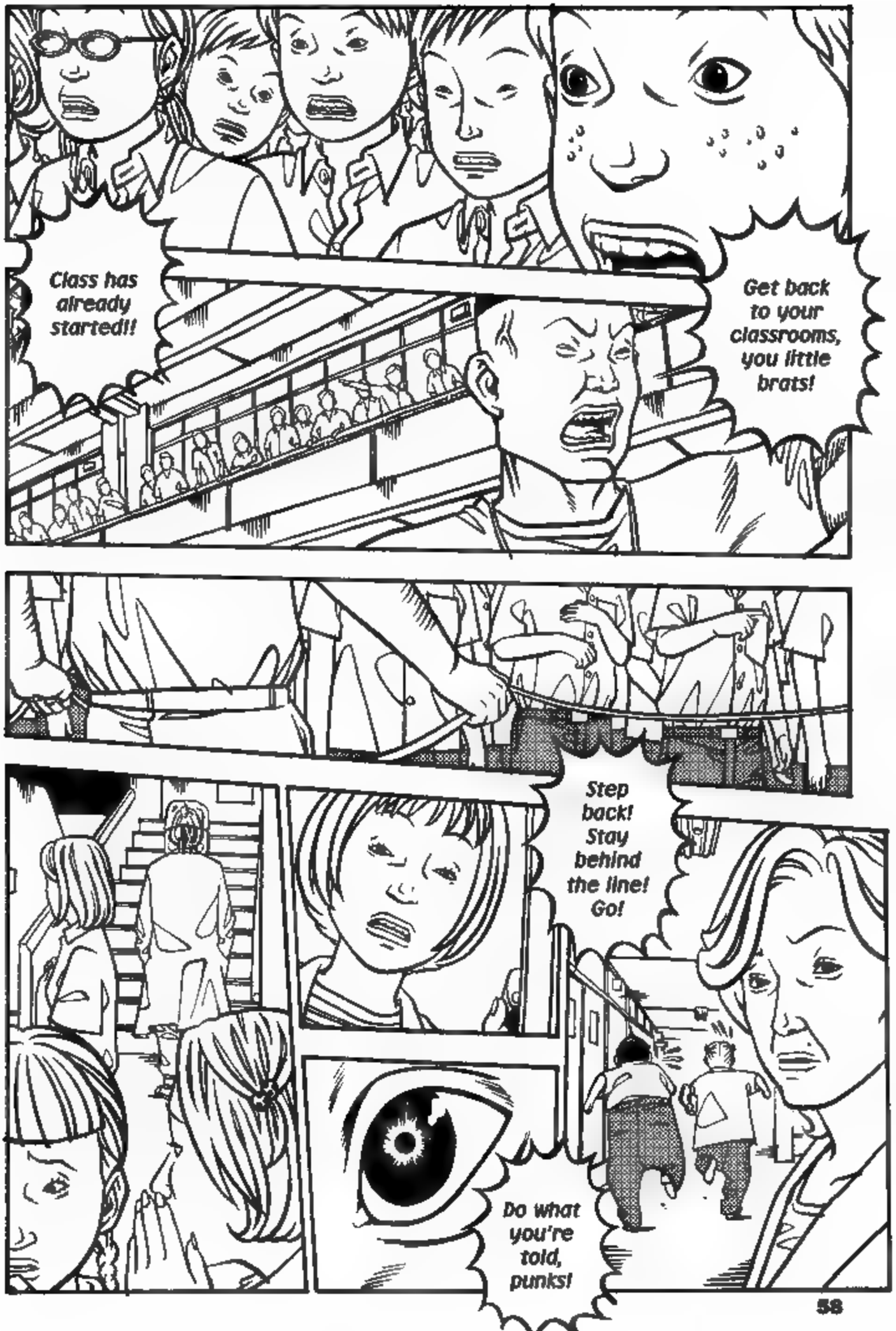
CLUNK


G-good morning, sir!

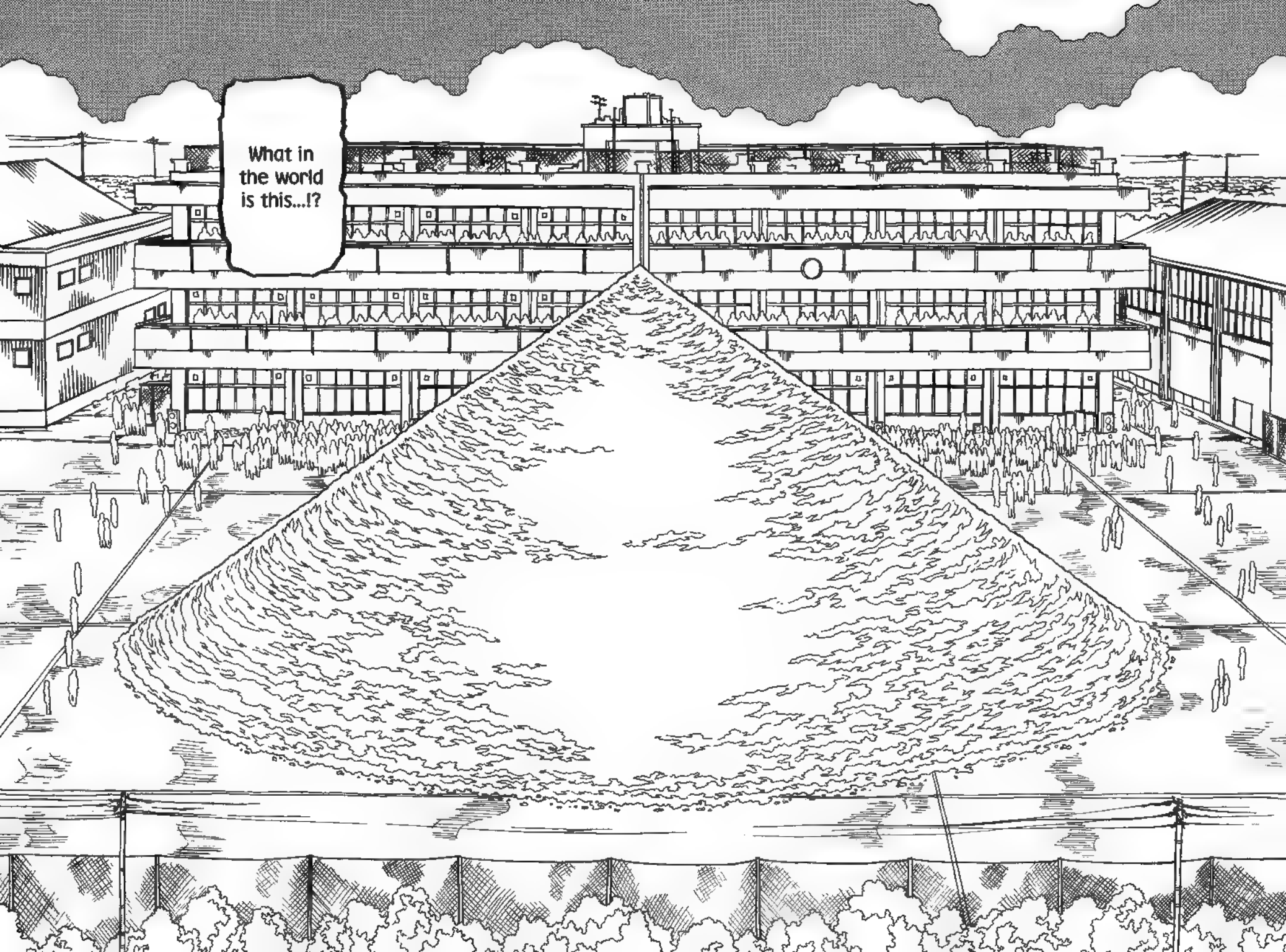

You're the detectives from Kamikawa, am I correct!?
Thank you very much for coming all the way out here...

But could I ask you to come with me!?
I have no idea what's going on...


Well, um, I-I, um...
Um, my name's Katakuri. I'm the officer in charge of "Soil New Town."
KRR
KRR


Class has already started!!
Get back to your classrooms, you little brats!
Step back! Stay behind the line! Go!
Do what you're told, punks!

This "thing" was already here when the pupils came to school this morning...
Well, how should I explain it...
I really don't have the slightest idea what's going on...
Ever since last night's blackout, only strange things have been happening around here...
Do *you* know what this thing is?
Um, I-I'm afraid I lack the experience to deal with all of this...


What in the world is this...!?

What fuckin' kind of prank is this?

I gotta say this one's a damn lot bigger than the last one.

Sir, but this is "salt." Again!

There must be a connection between this and what we found in the Suzushiros' house.

Haha, yeah, that's a wig all right!

That geezer's wearin' a wig too!

Looks more like some old geezer and a hag to me.

Hey Tomiyama, are those guys real detectives, what do you think?

They look so uncool it almost hurts, Seki.

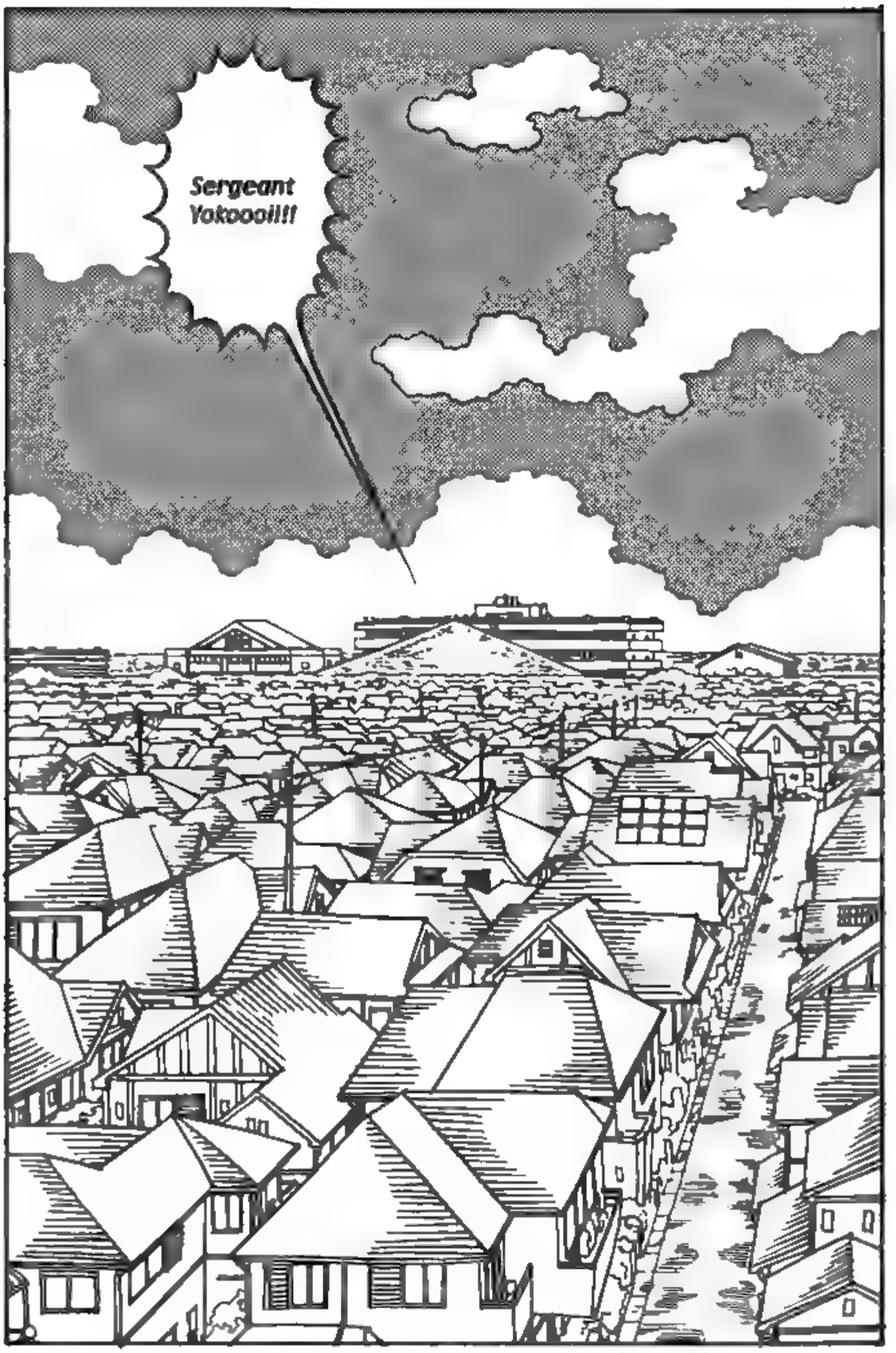
SNIFF

SNIFF

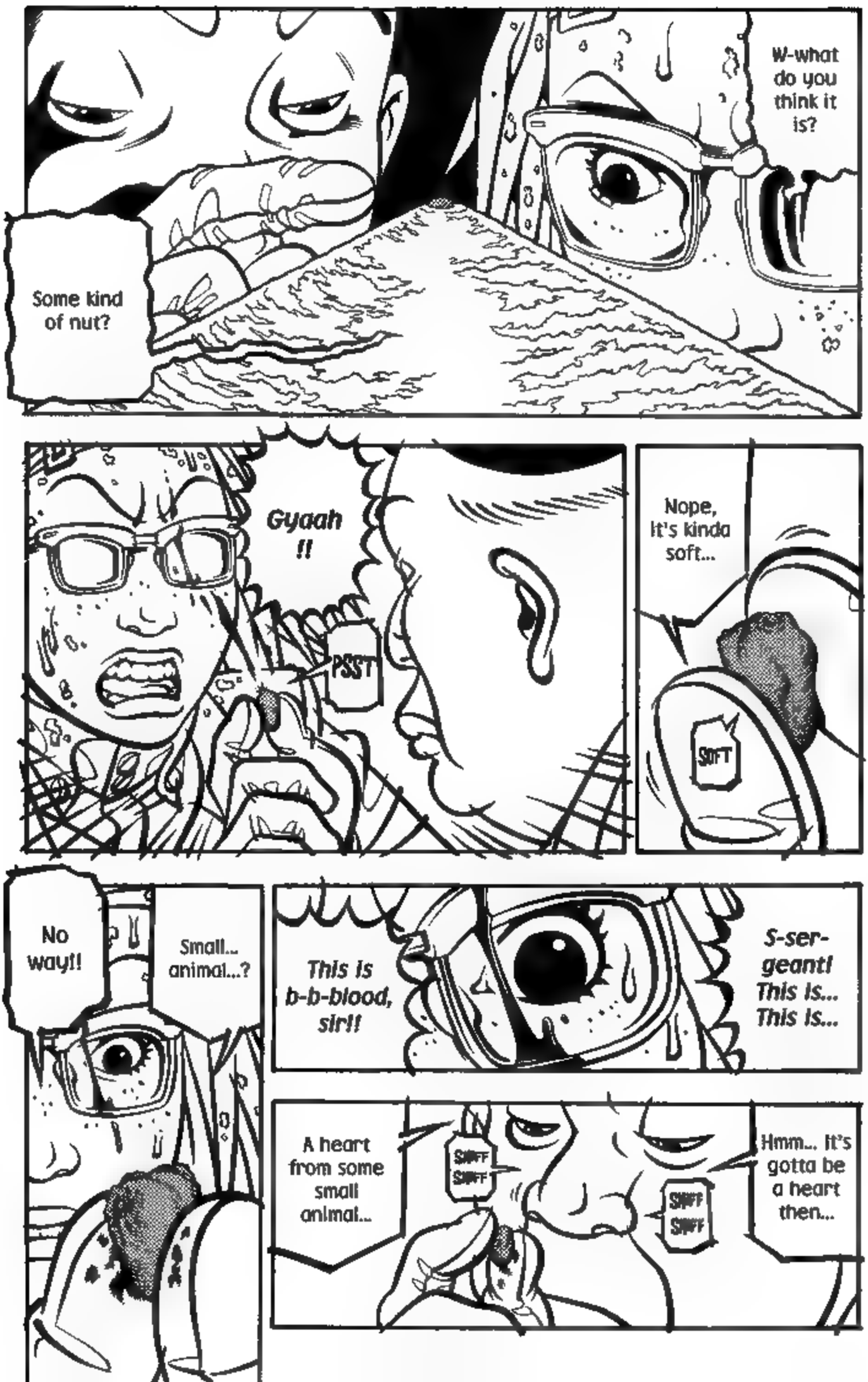
Hmm?

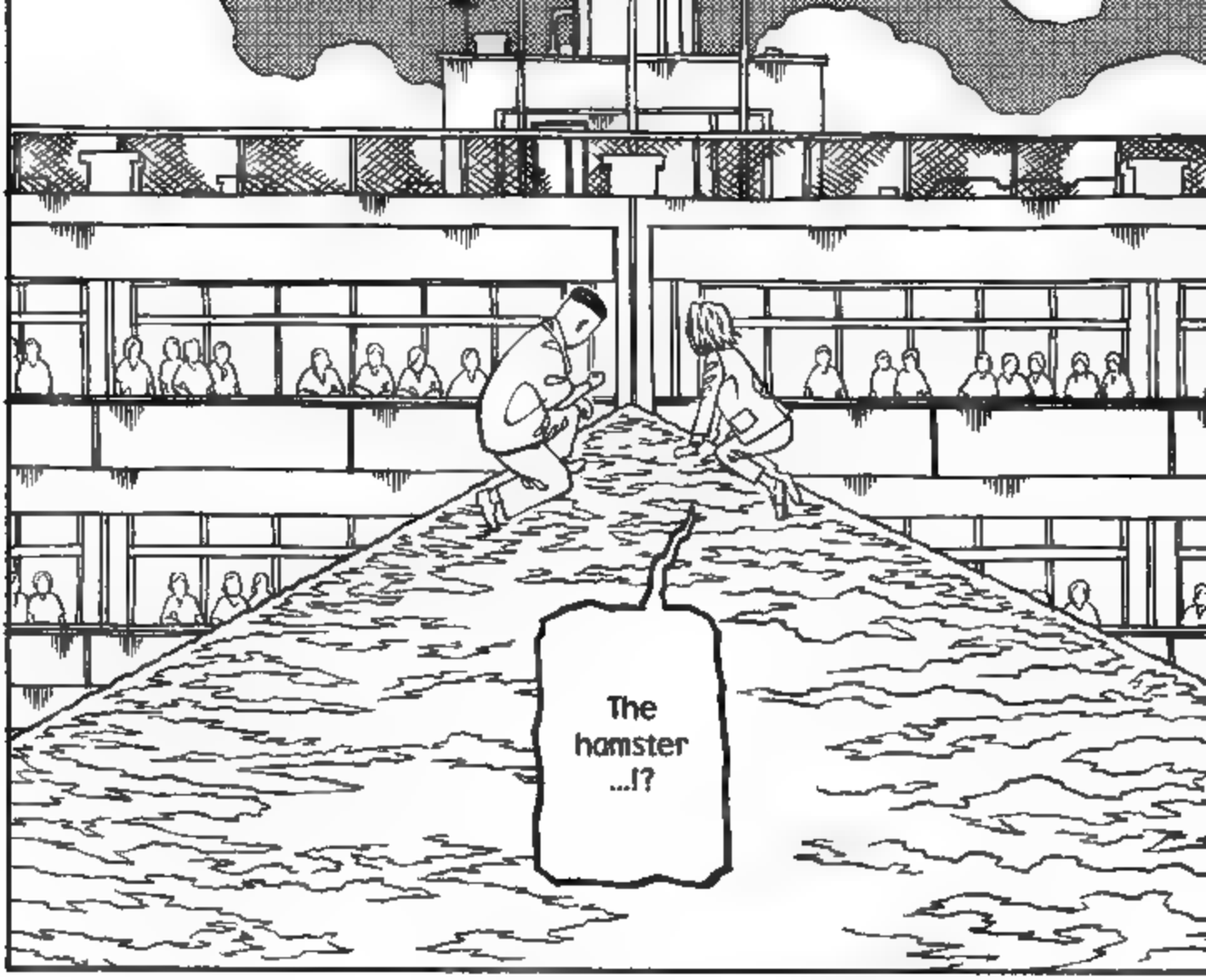
STIFF
STIFF
STIFF
!?
Sergeant Yokoi?
What are you doing, sir!?
Ah!!
T-that's sexual harass-ment just now, sir!!
The CSI staff won't like this!!
Sir, we must keep the crime scene in its original state!
Shut the hell up, bitch!

Do your best, wiggle!
Uwoh hah hah hah
That's so lame!!
Shit, now they're climbin' up that thing!
Sir, please come down!
Don't fall down, hag!
Ah hah hah hah
I am scared!
T-t-t-t- this is so high!
SIFF
SIFF
SIFF
This is so embar- rassing!


Sergeant
Yokoooi!!!

It's getting into my nostrils...
Ptui! Ptui! Salty!
!?
Gyaaah !!
SNIFF SNIFF
SNIFF


W-what do you think it is?
Some kind of nut?
Gyaah !!
PSST
Nope, it's kinda soft...
SOFT
No way!!
Small... animal...?
This is b-b-blood, sir!!
S-ser-geant! This is... This is...
A heart from some small animal...
SNIFF SNIFF
SNIFF SNIFF
Hmm... It's gotta be a heart then...


The hamster ...I?

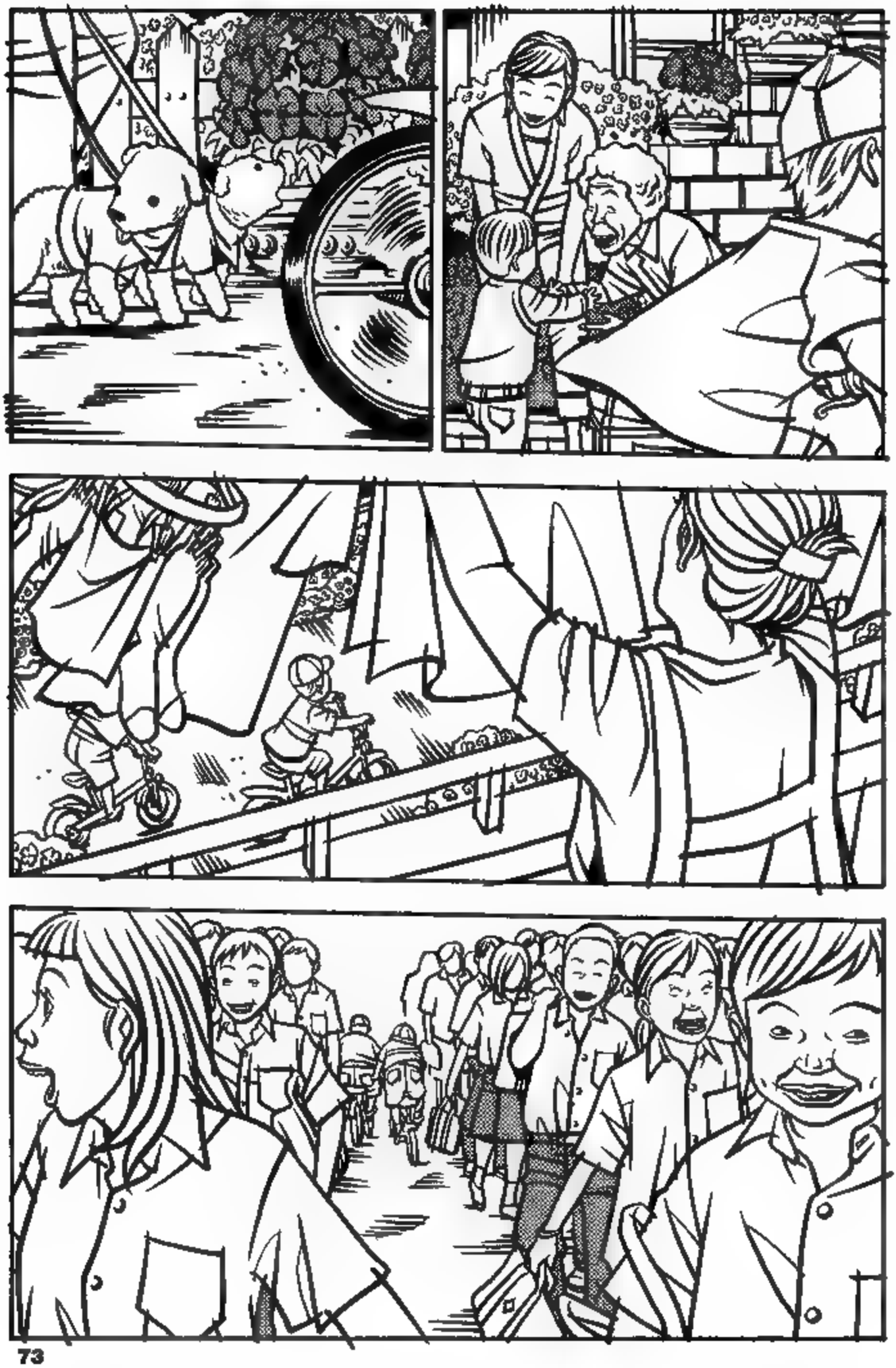
Yes, sir?
...
Onoda ...

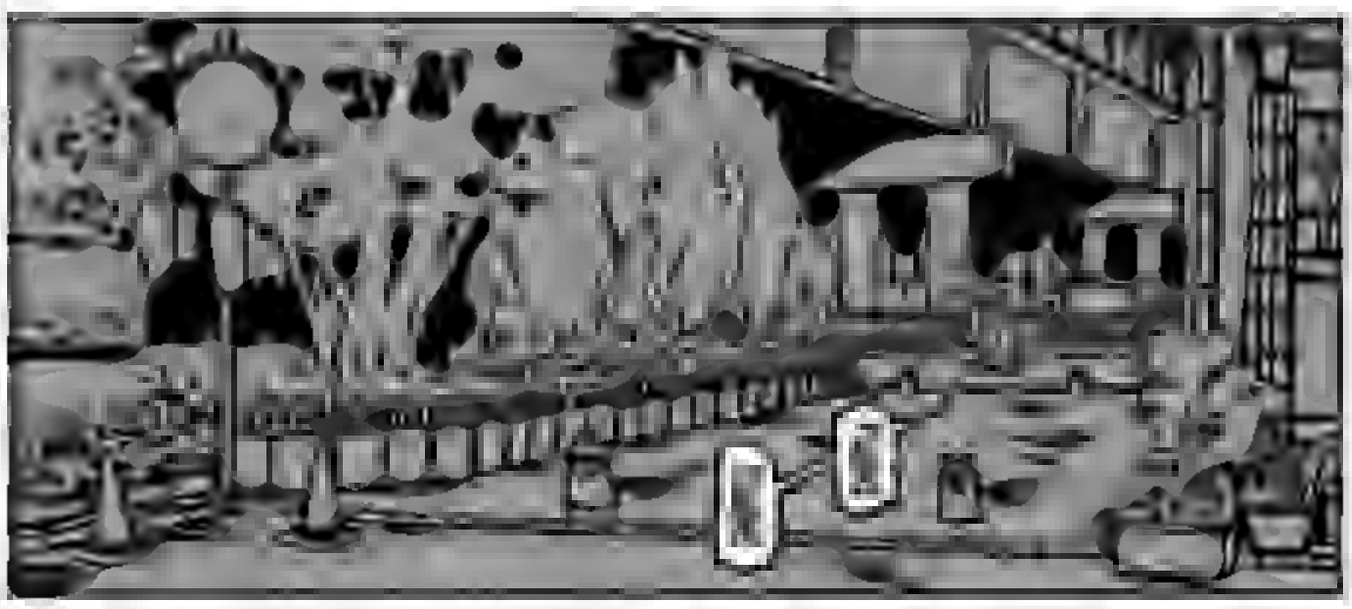
It's time to go back to the station and put together an investigation team.
警察署
立入禁止

SOIL
Block 1-1 [End]

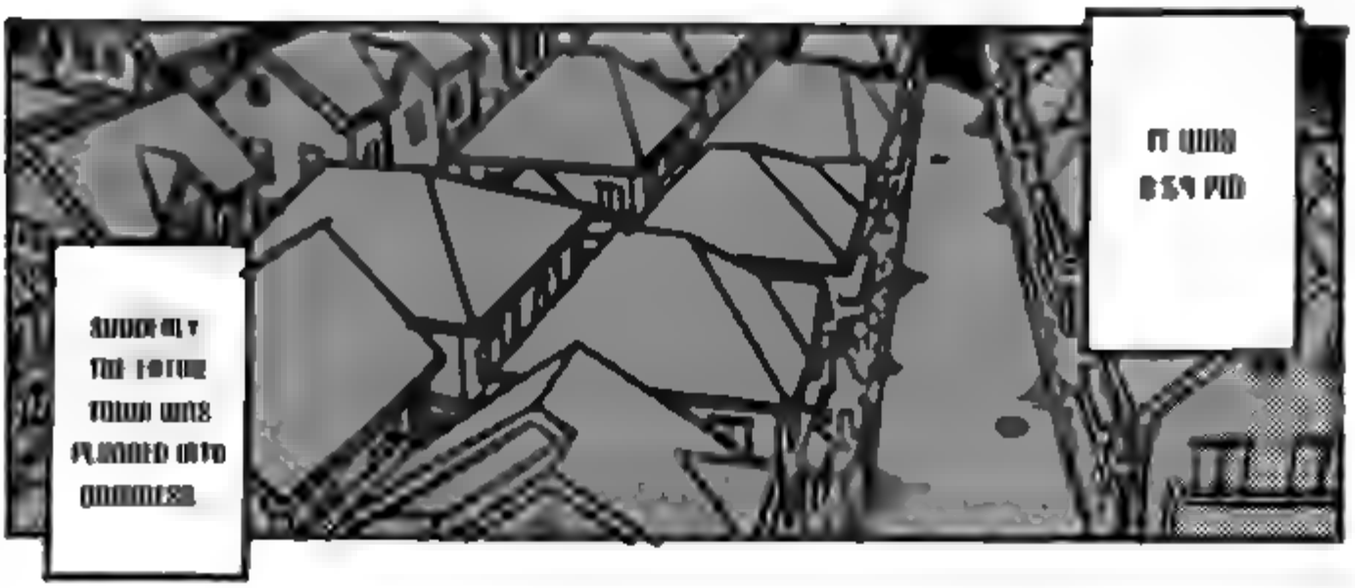
SOIL
Block 1-2 [The Night of the Blackout]

English version by KOTONOHA
Additional translation by ZUBARI
QC by ZUBARI & ERUTAN
kotonoha.monkey-pirate.com





BLOCK 1-2


IT WAS
DEAD

I can t get through with the mobile either, sir
Great, the phone's dead.
CLACK
[The Night of the Blackout]
What the hel s going on?
I suppose that's gotta mean the power's down on the sw tchboard s end too
This is "Soil New Town" Police Box.
Kamikawa Station, do you copy?
Damn, we must be getting radio interfer- ence too.
This is "Soil New Town" Police Box.
Kamikawa Station, do you copy?

TO THINK THAT THE TRANSMISSION TOWER HAD TOPPLED OVER... IT WAS UNTHINKABLE!
I FELT COMPLETELY HELPLESS.
IT FELT LIKE THE TOWN HAD BEEN SURGICALLY REMOVED FROM THE FACE OF THE PLANET
HOW WIDE AN AREA COULD POSSIBLY HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY THE BLACKOUT..?
MY HEAD WAS FILLED WITH ALL KINDS OF HORRIBLE SCENARIOS.
PERHAPS THERE HAD BEEN A DISASTER, OR AN ACCIDENT .. OR EVEN WORSE, A WAR?
COULD IT BE THAT IT WAS LIKE THIS ACROSS JAPAN. ?
So, this is the only region, correct?
And the cause is still unknown ...
Pheew ...
Roger This is Kamikawa Station ...
Please go ahead..

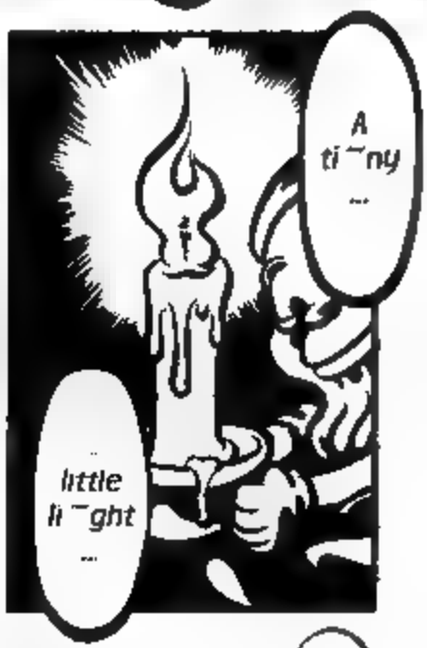
IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE THE TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDENT JUMPED INTO THE OFFICE...
HAH
HAH
HAH
Can't you sense every-one's anxiety!?
This feeling of anxiety must be eliminated from this town at once!
What else can we say? The power company is currently investigating the cause.
What do you mean, you know nothing?
In my capacity as town council president, it is my duty to explain what exactly is going on to the citizens!
Well... There's no need for worry. I'm sure the people here won't cause any trouble.
We just need to make sure that no one causes a panic...
And everyone will just have to make sure they lock their doors.
I'm sure we can manage until morning, somehow.

What is a concern, however, is the possibility of "strangers" taking advantage of this darkness to infiltrate our town!
I have complete confidence in the people of this town!
Of course they won't!!
Haha... Whenever something happens, the one to raise the biggest fuss is always h m
I'm count ng on you!
Don't forget to make your patrols!
"Strangers," huh.

O-Officer Katakuri...
Officer Katakuri!
Huh !?

* Suzushiro Family Disappearance Case Task Force
鈴白家失踪事件捜査本部
I haven't even slept a bit, so that's why I...
You see, ever since that night, crazy things just keep on happening...
I-I'm very sorry, please excuse me!!
What? Oh! S-sorry, sir!
W-what are you doing, Sergeant Yokoi?
Shut up! This helps me to relax!
TOUCH
TOUCH
I still can't believe that a "real crime" could happen in such a peaceful town...
TOUCH
TOUCH
Where was I...
KRRRR
U-um, well...
Too bad you women don't come with anything as convenient as this, eh?
That's sexual harass-ment, sir!

JASRAC 出0400476-401



Note: This is from a famous Japanese song named "Miagete goran yoru no hoshi wo" by Kyu SAKAMOTO.

KARRRR
Yeah, it's quite peaceful.
Hm, about an hour left 'til dawn...
Good job, officer
The stars must've been beautiful without all the lights.
Back from patrol, sir. No unusual activity to report.
I mean, within those one and a half years, the most serious things I had to deal with were runaway dogs
A town as happy as this is pretty rare, don t you think?
I sure lucked out when I got this town as my first assignment as a police officer
We're still on duty, but...
Thanks!

It's been three years since I came to this town... And I feel it.
After all this time, I still feel that I haven't genuinely been accepted here...
SHUFFLE
Huh?
Yeah? Me, I can't help but feel kinda uncomfortable here though...
So, in order to maintain this delicate balance, all "strangers" are considered risks that need to be watched out for
If you keep on working as a cop, you get it eventually. "Everyone's happy"... If anything, it's abnormal.
But one day, that balance will collapse, because its very existence in the first place is abnormal...
SHUFFLE
SHUFFLE
"Strangers"...
That's what we are in this town...
"Strangers"...
Hm?
Oh!?
"Bang!" and all kinds of strange things just spill out...
SHUFFLE
SHUFFLE
You mean, like surface tension? With even the smallest shock...
SHUFFLE

Uwah!?

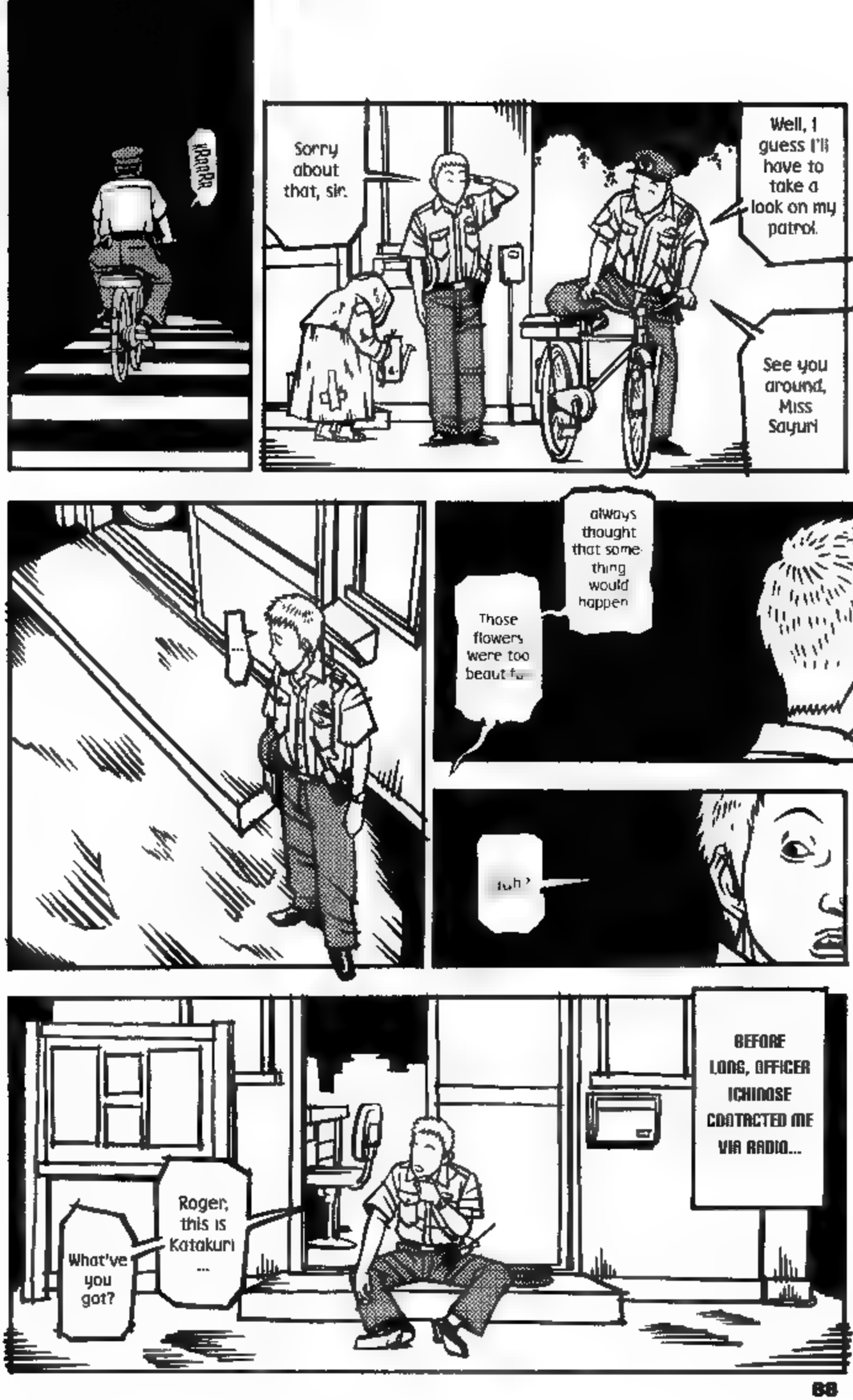
What is that?
A shooting star?

No...
It's way too big for that...

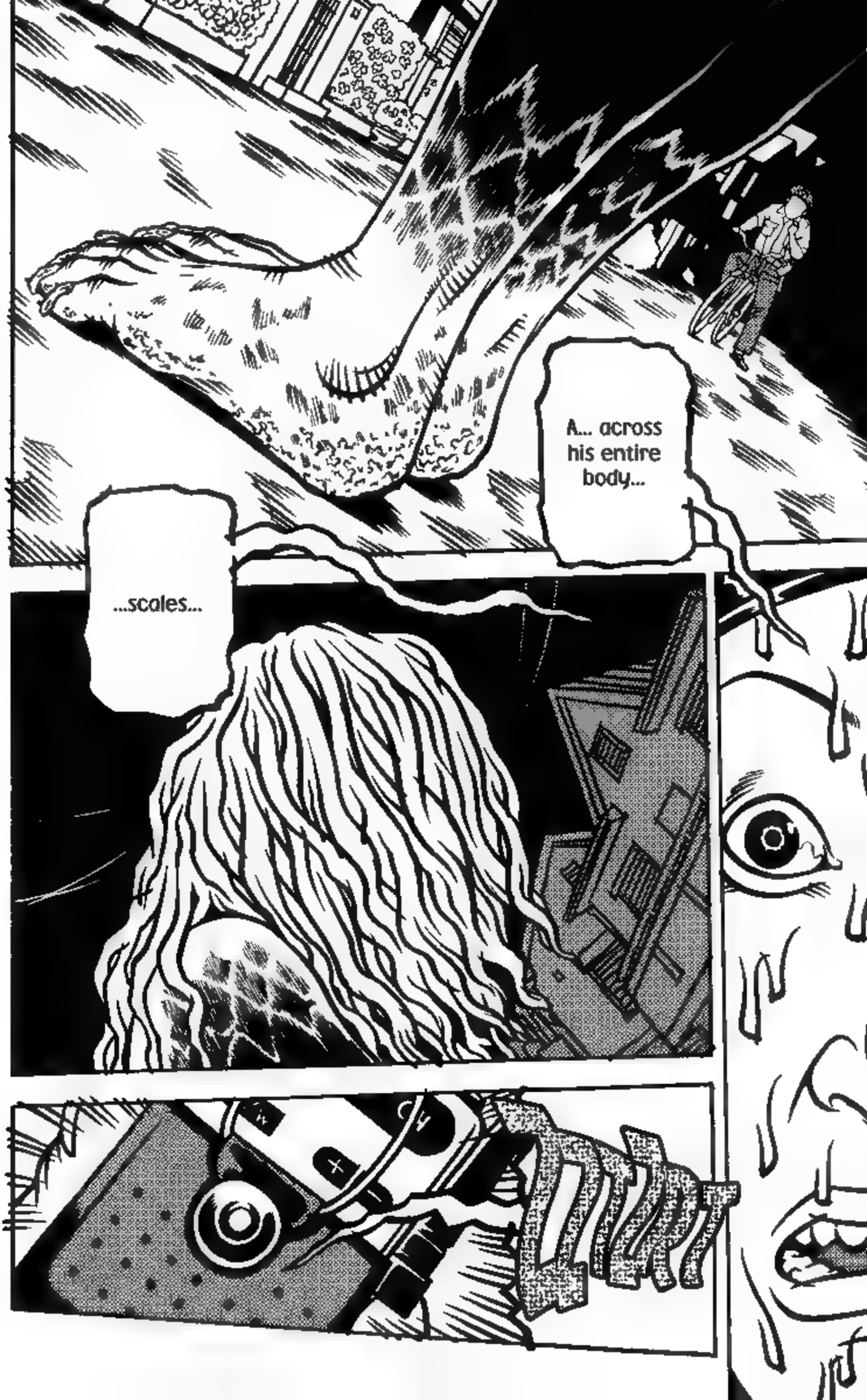
"Miss Sayuri" ...?
You're out watering flowers, even on a night like this?
O-oh, it's you, Miss Sayuri.
She was caught in the fire and suffered burns across her entire body...
Apparently, she's been living there since the time that the area was still a little farming village.
Yes... She's an old lady who lives in the ruins of the Inari shrine* that lies at the outskirts of town.
Jm... actually, well, by "ruins," the shrine is only in ruins now because it was burnt down in a fire...
Ha, that flower garden of a town's gotta be the sickest thing I've ever seen.
TOUCH
TOUCH
Well, anyway, she's gone a bit senile, and wanders around the town watering flowers in the middle of the night.
As a result, the town council established an ordinance requiring that flowers be planted in front of all residences.

* A shrine to worship a Shinto God named "Uka no Mitama," the patron deity of agriculture.

The flowers ...
...are gone...
Of the gardens in town, the Suzushiros' one was considered especially beautiful, and was quite well known.
You'd better go take a look...
Somehow, I've a bad feeling about it ...
The Suzushiros flowers ...
They're all gone...
Huh? What did you say, ma'am?
...and get over there!
Hurry up...
Hehe, actually, I spent all my time looking up at the stars...
The Suzushiros', huh? How was it, again?


KRRRR
Sorry about that, sir.
Well, I guess I'll have to take a look on my patrol.
See you around, Miss Sayuri
...
always thought that something would happen
Those flowers were too beaut
huh?
BEFORE LONG, OFFICER ICHINOSE CONTACTED ME VIA RADIO...
Roger, this is Katakuri ...
What've you got?

Officer Ichinose, do you copy sir?
Whuh? What's going on? Strange
What? What did you say!?
S-suspicious person...!?
Officer Ichinose!?
I-I'm sorry, but your voice's too...
You said "start naked"?
WHAT?


A... across his entire body...
...scales...

IN A PANIC, I RUSHED OVER TO THE LOCATION..

Do you copy me, sir!!?

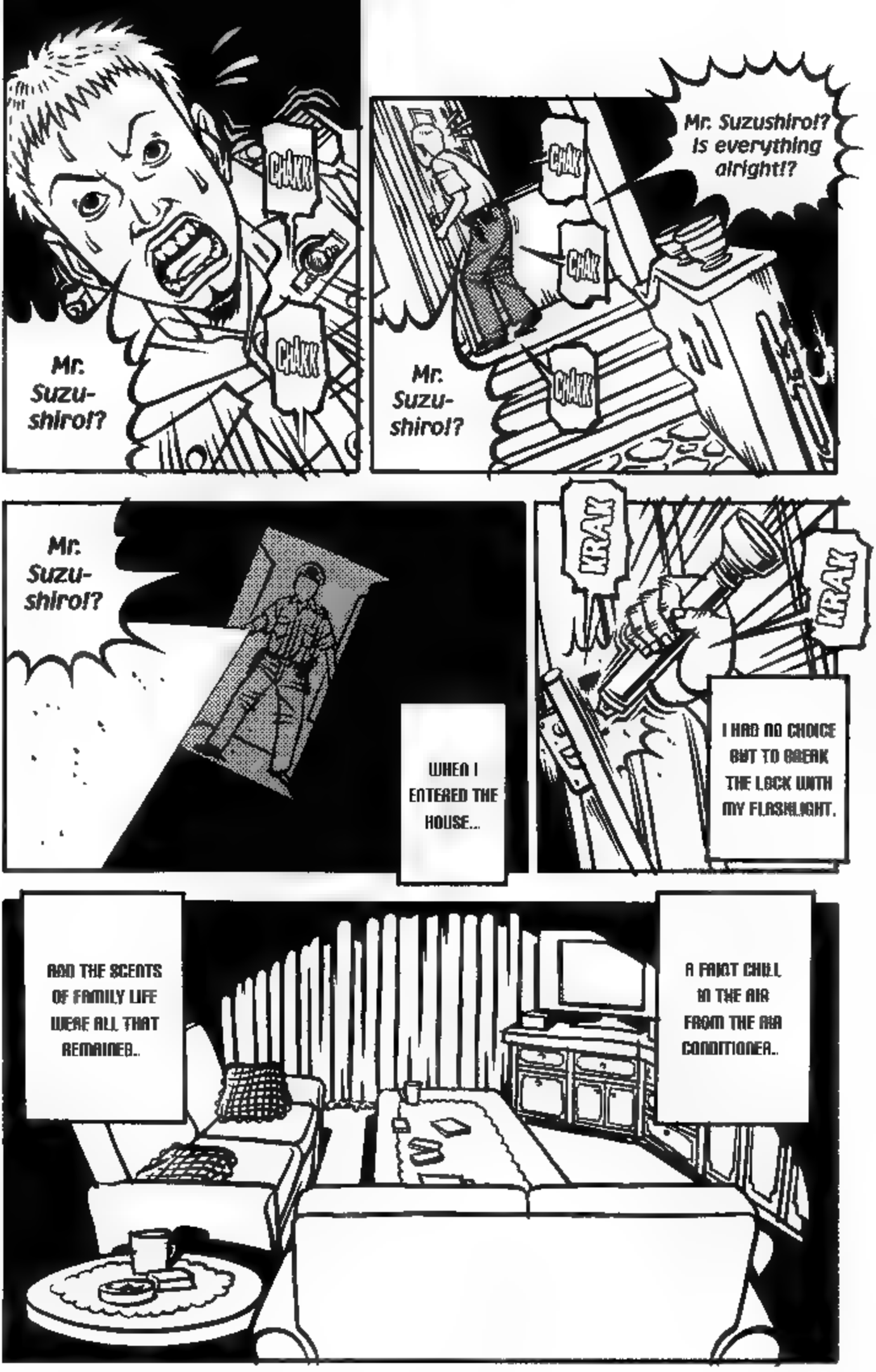
I-Ichinose, sir, do you copy!?

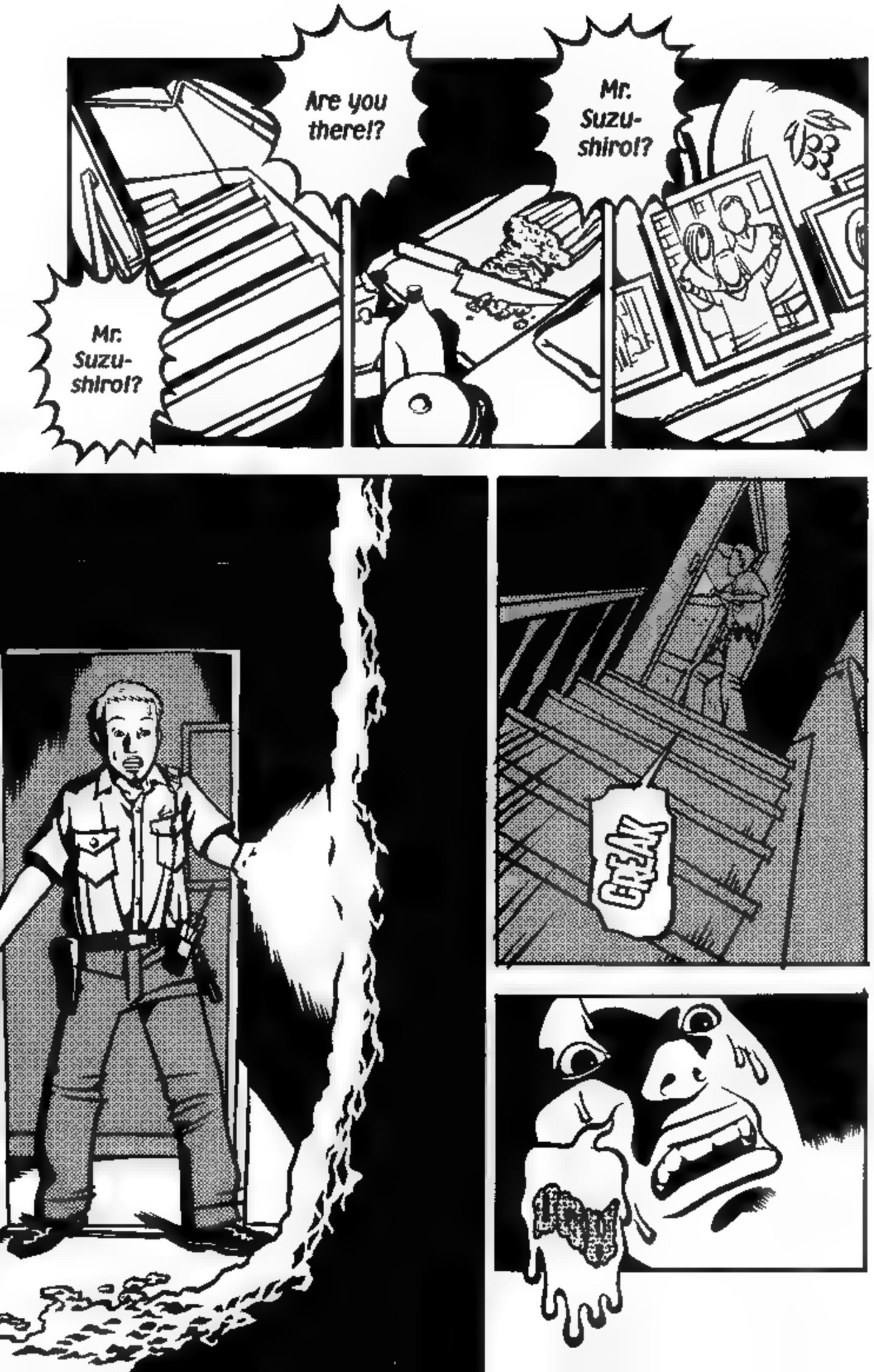
BUT THERE WAS NO SIGN OF OFFICER ICHINOSE...

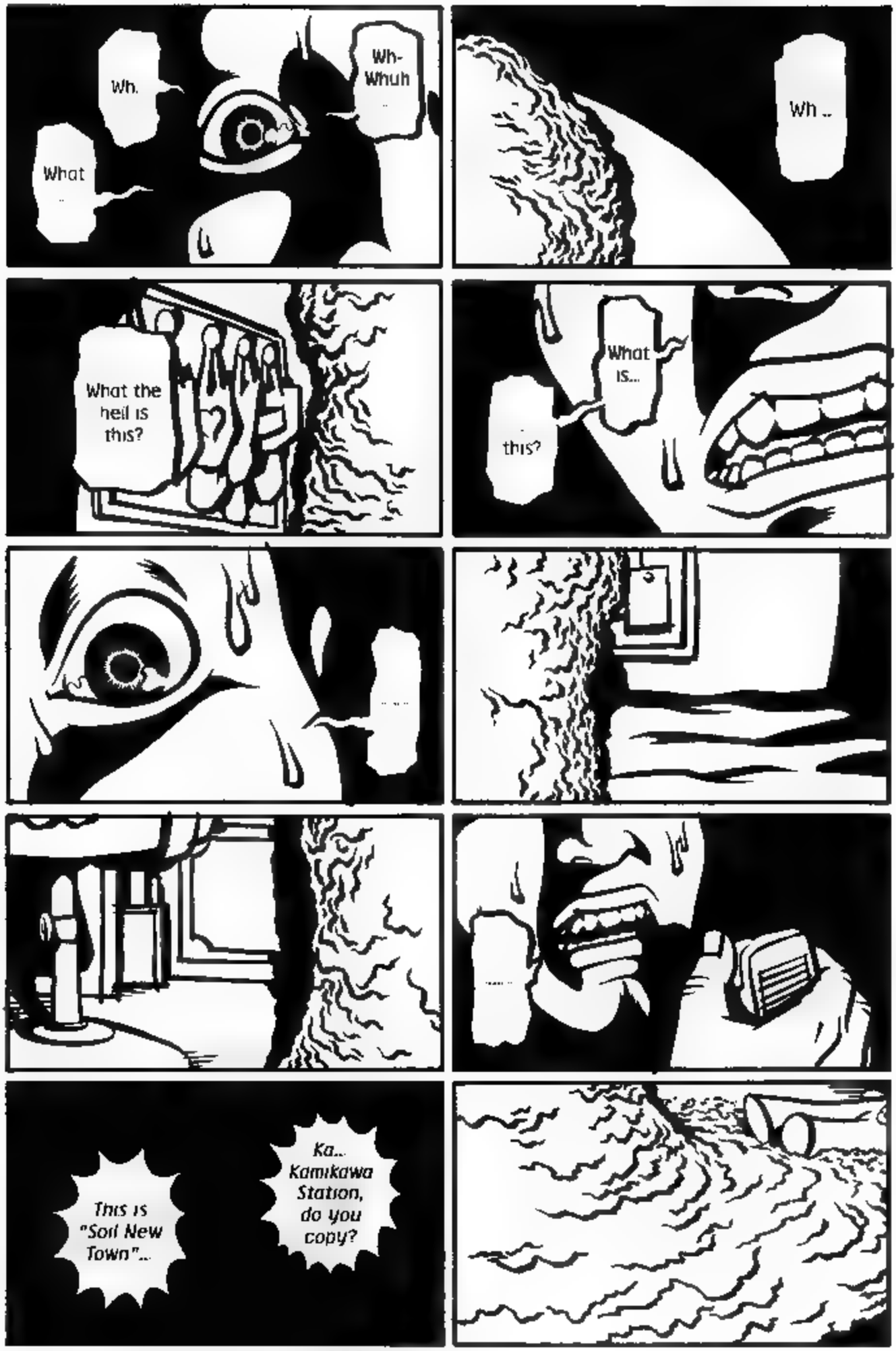
HIS BICYCLE HAD BEEN ABANDONED ON THE STREET JUST BEFORE THE SUZUSHIROS' HOUSE.

THE FLOWERS FROM THE SUZUSHIROS' GARDEN HAD BEEN COMPLETELY REMOVED, DOWN TO THE ROOTS.

REMEMBERING HOW BEAUTIFUL THEY WERE, IT WAS A VERY STRANGE SIGHT..


CHAKK
CHAKK
Mr. Suzu-shiro!?
CHAKK
CHAKK
CHAKK
Mr. Suzushiro!? Is everything alright!?
Mr. Suzu-shiro!?
Mr. Suzu-shiro!?
WHEN I ENTERED THE HOUSE...
KRAK
KRAK
I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO BREAK THE LOCK WITH MY FLASHLIGHT.
AND THE SCENTS OF FAMILY LIFE WERE ALL THAT REMAINED..
A FAINT CHILL IN THE AIR FROM THE AIR CONDITIONER..


Are you there!?
Mr. Suzu-shiro!?
Mr. Suzu-shiro!?
GRRAK


Wh.
What
Wh-
Whuh
Wh..
What the heil is this?
What is...
this?
Ka... Kamikawa Station, do you copy?
This is "Soil New Town"...

SOIL
Block 1-2 [End]

SOIL
Block 1-3 [Investigation]

English version by NOMAD SOUL
QC by CECILE & ERUTAN
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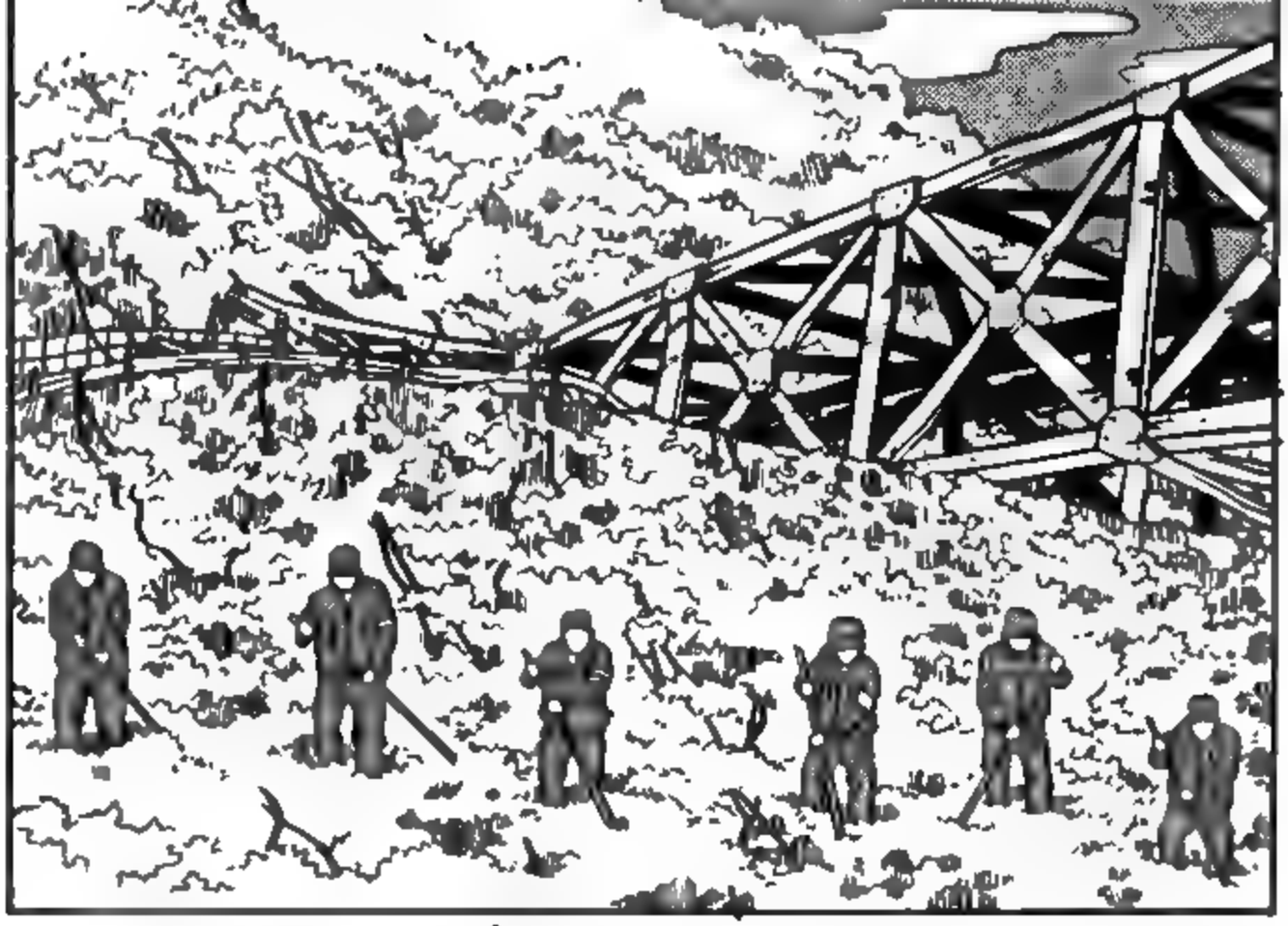
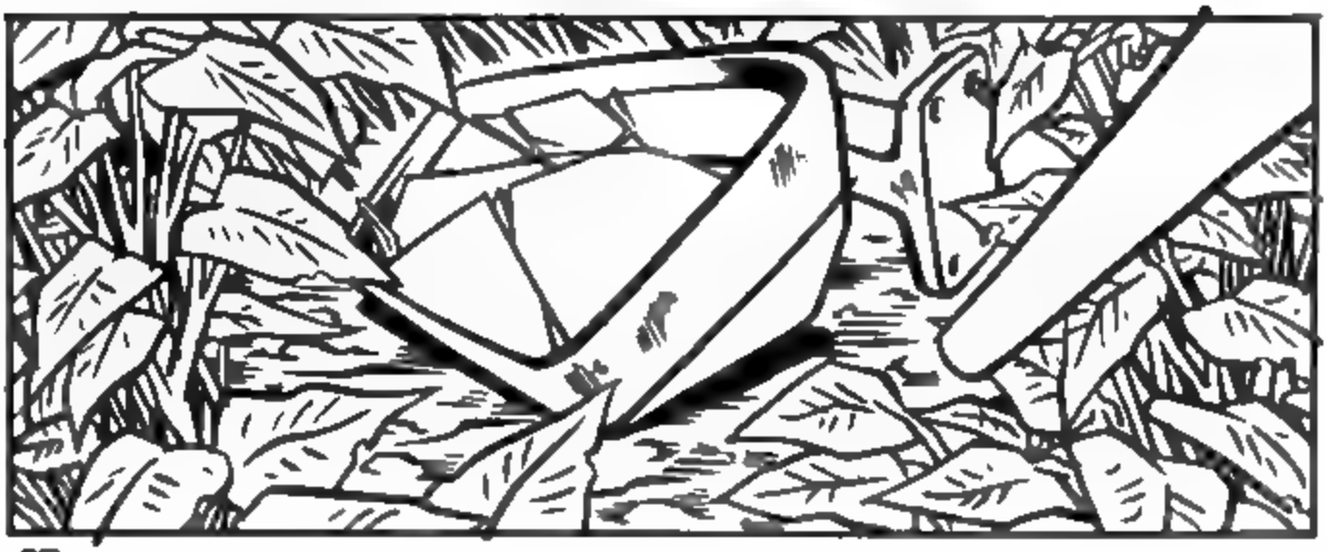
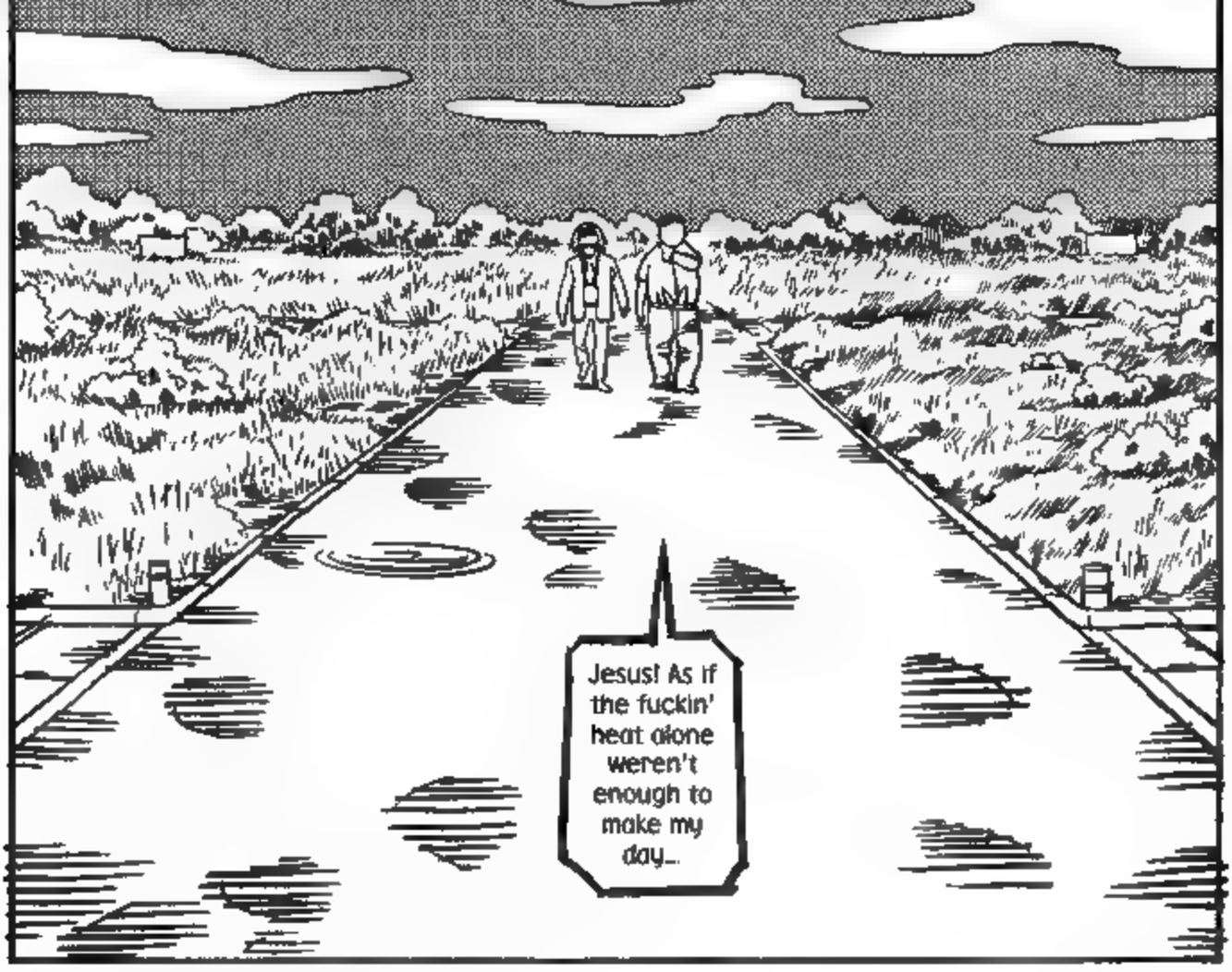
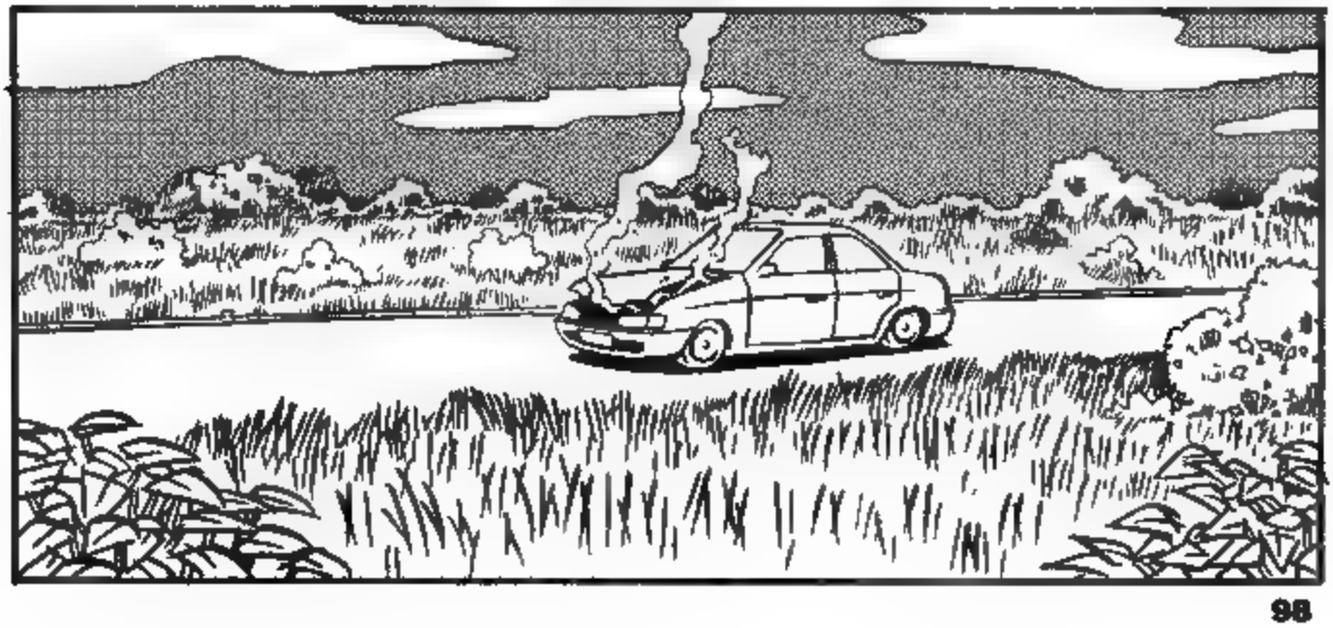
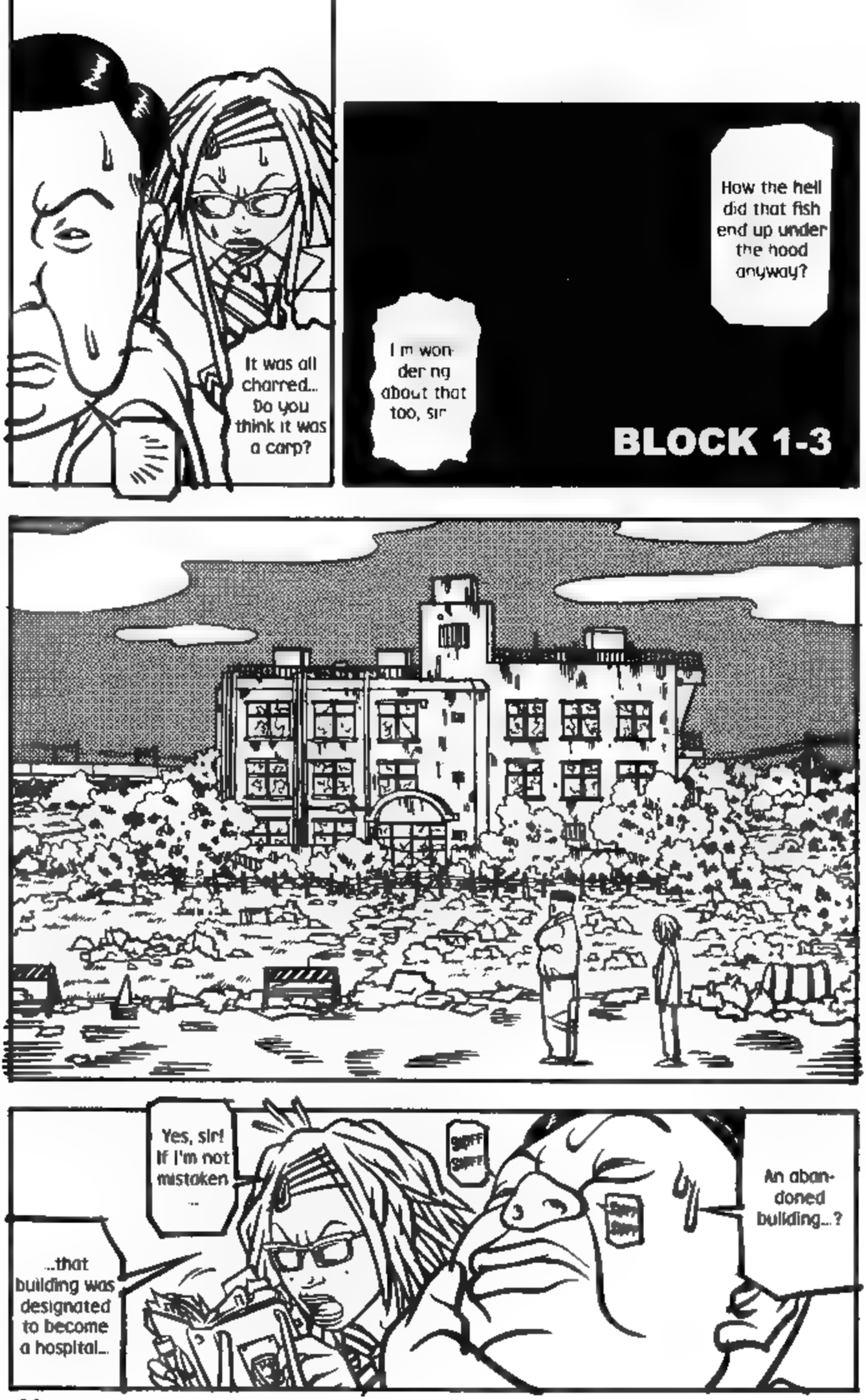


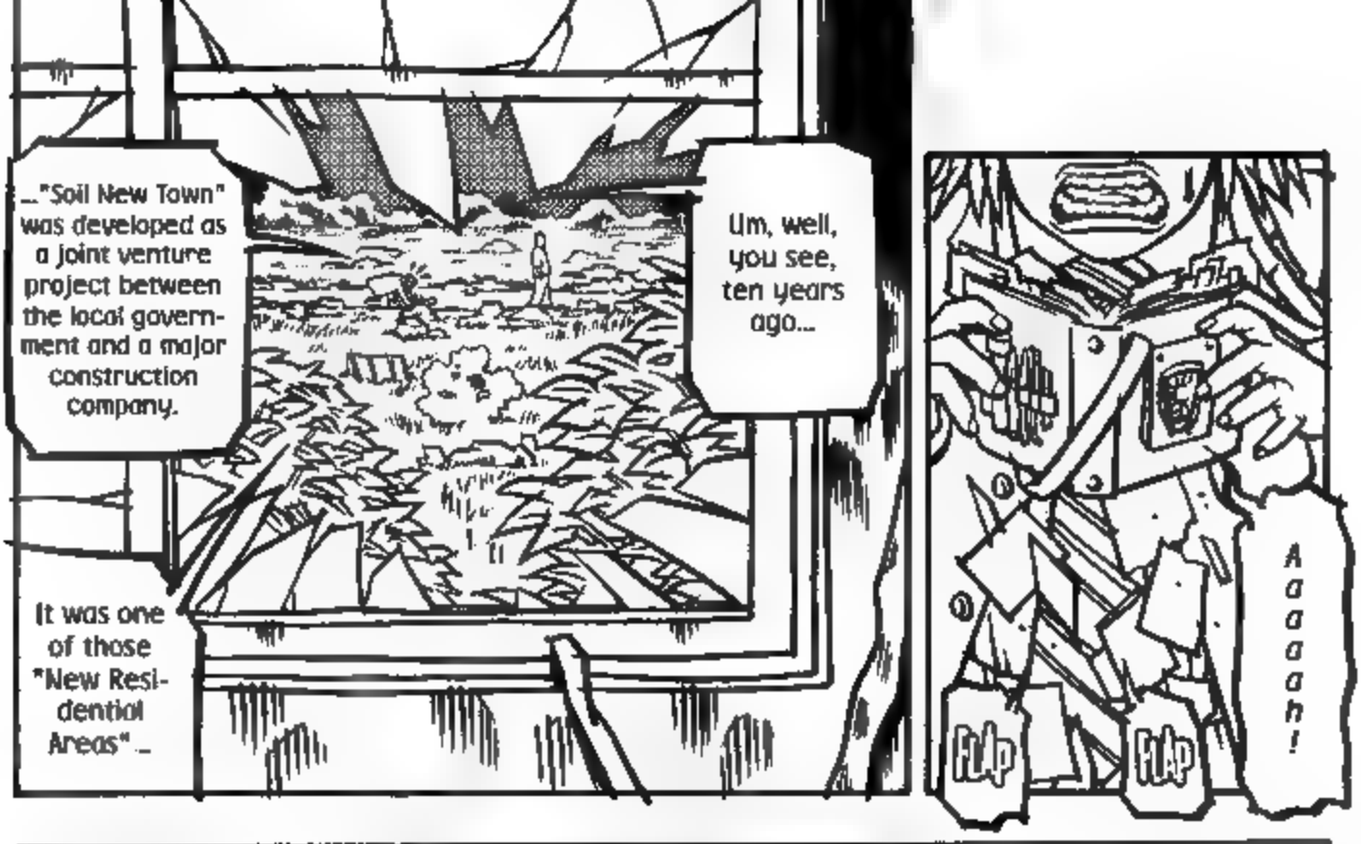


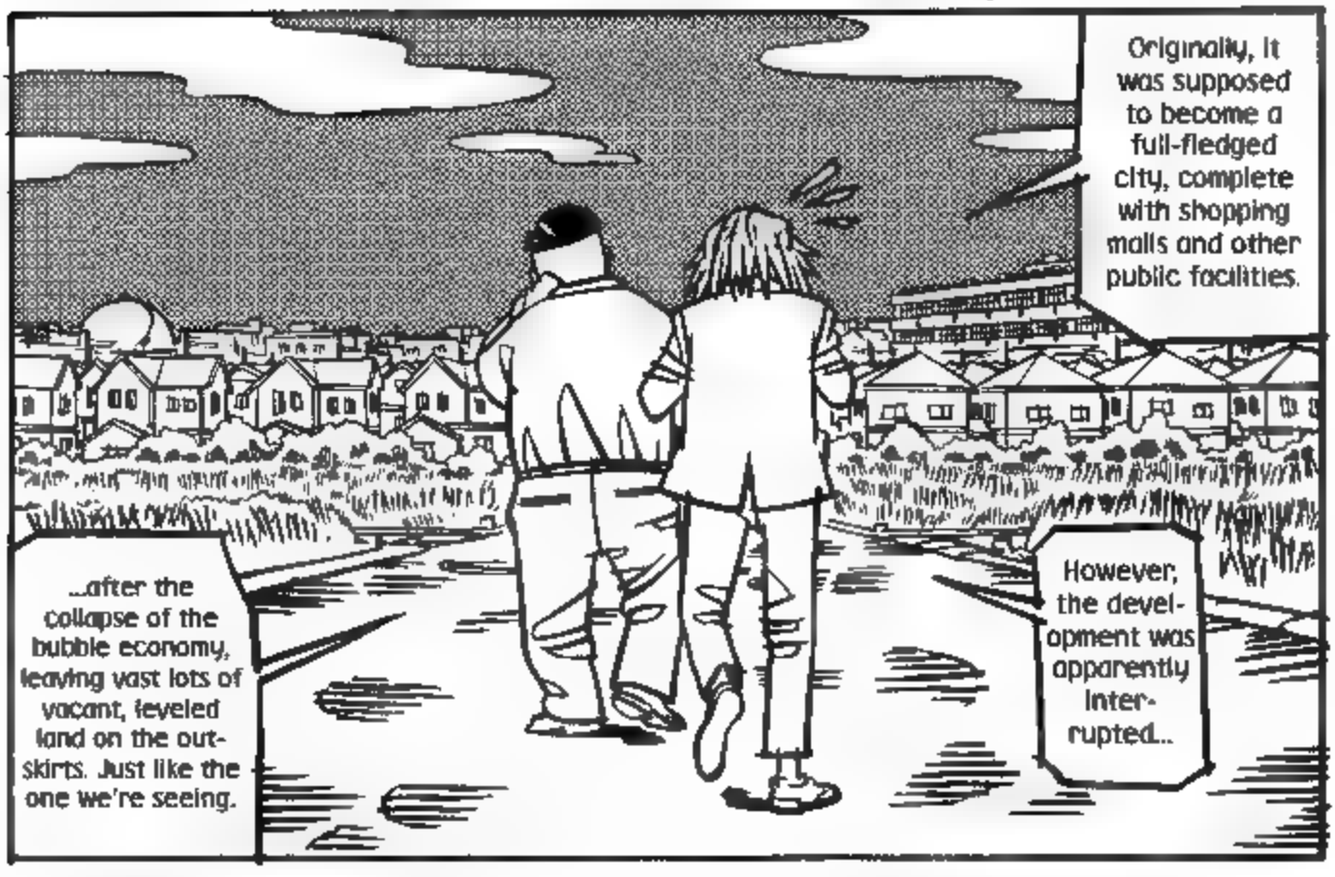

Jesus! As if the fuckin' heat alone weren't enough to make my day...

....
Madam Detec-tive!?
I guess waxing your legs was more impor-tant than the car's mainte-nance, eh?

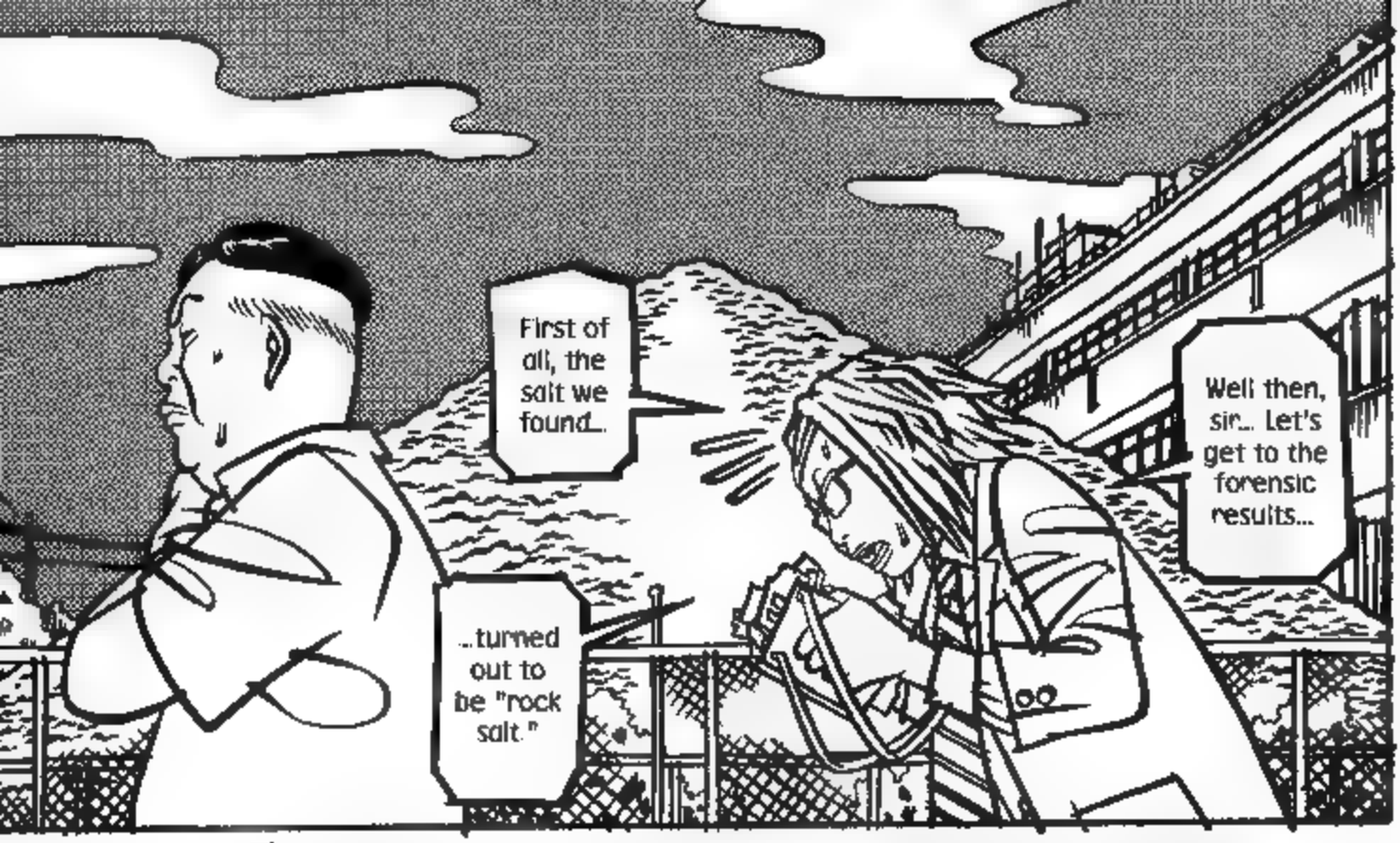



It was all charred... Do you think it was a carp?
I'm wondering about that too, sir
How the hell did that fish end up under the hood anyway?
BLOCK 1-3
Yes, sir! If I'm not mistaken ...
...that building was designated to become a hospital...
An abandoned building...?

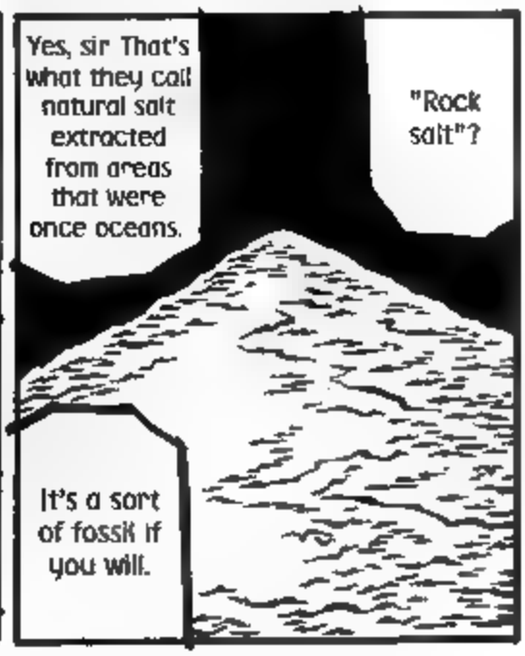

...“Soil New Town” was developed as a joint venture project between the local government and a major construction company.
Um, well, you see, ten years ago...
It was one of those “New Residential Areas”...
Flip
Flip
Aaaaah!

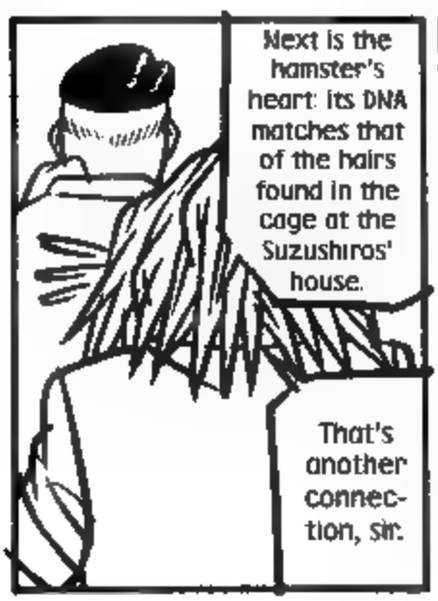

Originally, it was supposed to become a full-fledged city, complete with shopping malls and other public facilities.
...after the collapse of the bubble economy, leaving vast lots of vacant, leveled land on the outskirts. Just like the one we're seeing.
However, the development was apparently interrupted...

Thank you *so much* for looking up all that crap...
[Investigation]
Alright, I got it, I got it!


First of all, the salt we found...
...turned out to be "rock salt."
Well then, sir... Let's get to the forensic results...

Wait up, Tomi-yama!
The mineral and iron content analyses indicate that the salt piles from the Suzushiros' house and the schoolyard are of identical type...

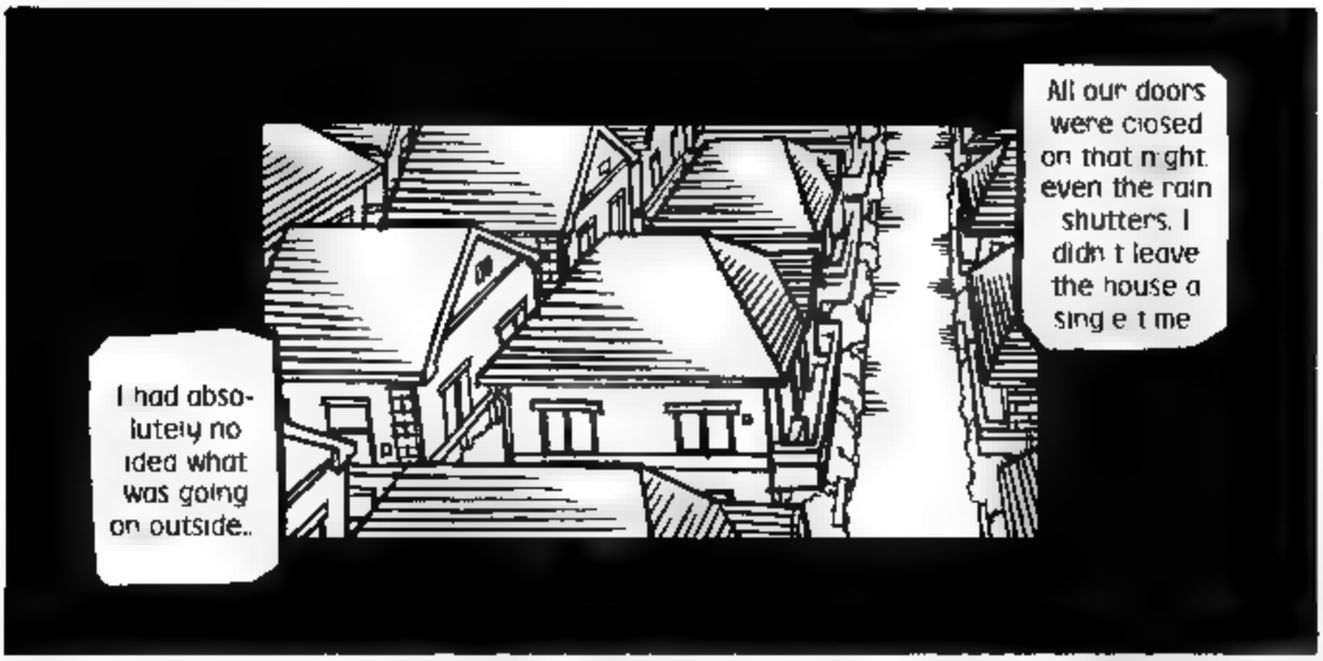

"Rock salt"?
Yes, sir. That's what they call natural salt extracted from areas that were once oceans.
It's a sort of fossil if you will.


Next is the hamster's heart: its DNA matches that of the hairs found in the cage at the Suzushiros' house.
That's another connection, sir.

The wiggle and the hag!
Hey, it's the tecs!
THUD!
.....

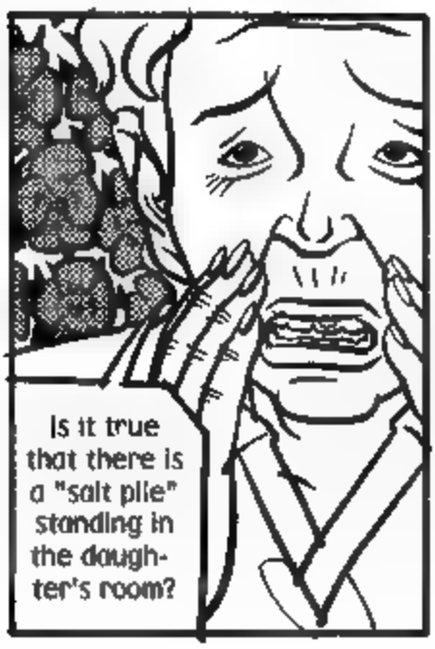
There's also the "scaled man" Officer Ichinose saw before he disappeared.
Apparently, the heart of the Suzushiros' pet was removed from its body and left where we found it.
This strongly suggests that the family's disappearance was caused by unnatural forces.
Seeing that he was involved in this case to a certain degree, we should proceed with our investigation accordingly.
No, I meant *you!* From your looks to the way you talk... I'm getting sick of it!
T-this is just how my hair is, sir. I can't do anything about it!
When will you finally do s'thing about that mop on yer head, eh!?
Sir!?
T-this heat is really abnormal, sir!
Fuck! I can't stand this anymore!

I can't believe you've been wastin' your energy on that worthless shit!
Listen, when dealin' with a fucked-up case like this one, things tend to just resolve themselves when I sit back and play with my dick!
G-g-g-g-good day, ma'am!
Good day, sir!
Aaaaah!
Help Help


All our doors were closed on that night, even the rain shutters. I didn't leave the house a single time.
I had absolutely no idea what was going on outside..

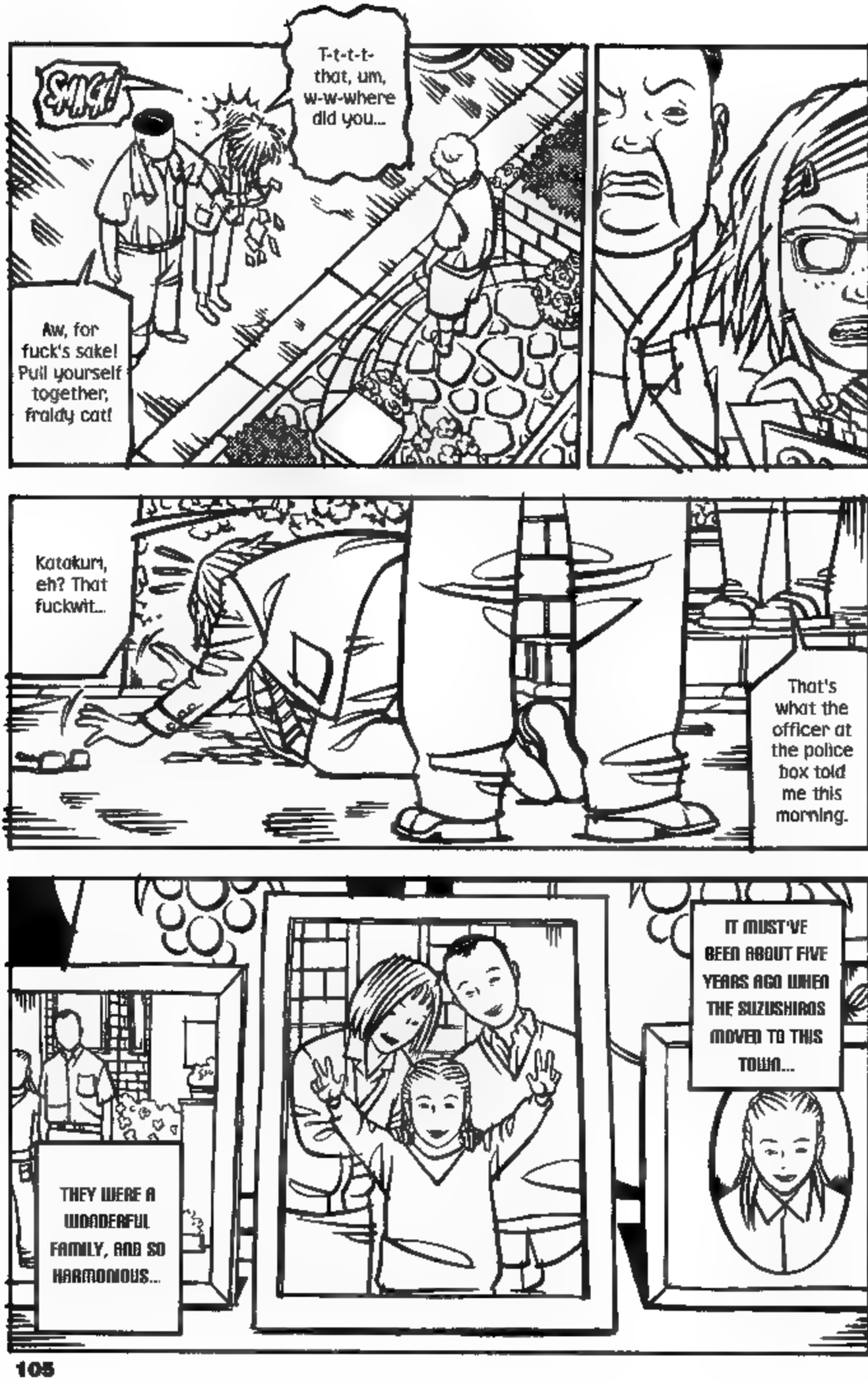
This is just too horrible. What in the world could have happened to them?
More importantly, were you able to find out something about the Suzushiros' disappearance?

A suspicious person?
We don't get people like that in this town. No, sir


Is it true that there is a "salt pile" standing in the daughter's room?

That's why everybody's worried about the Suzushiros.
This town is like a family, you know.

I pray to God that they are safe and sound.


SMACK!
T-t-t-t-that, um, w-w-where did you...
Aw, for fuck's sake! Pull yourself together, fraidy cat!
Katakuri, eh? That fuckwit...
That's what the officer at the police box told me this morning.
THEY WERE A WONDERFUL FAMILY, AND SO HARMONIOUS...
IT MUST'VE BEEN ABOUT FIVE YEARS AGO WHEN THE SUZUSHIROS MOVED TO THIS TOWN...

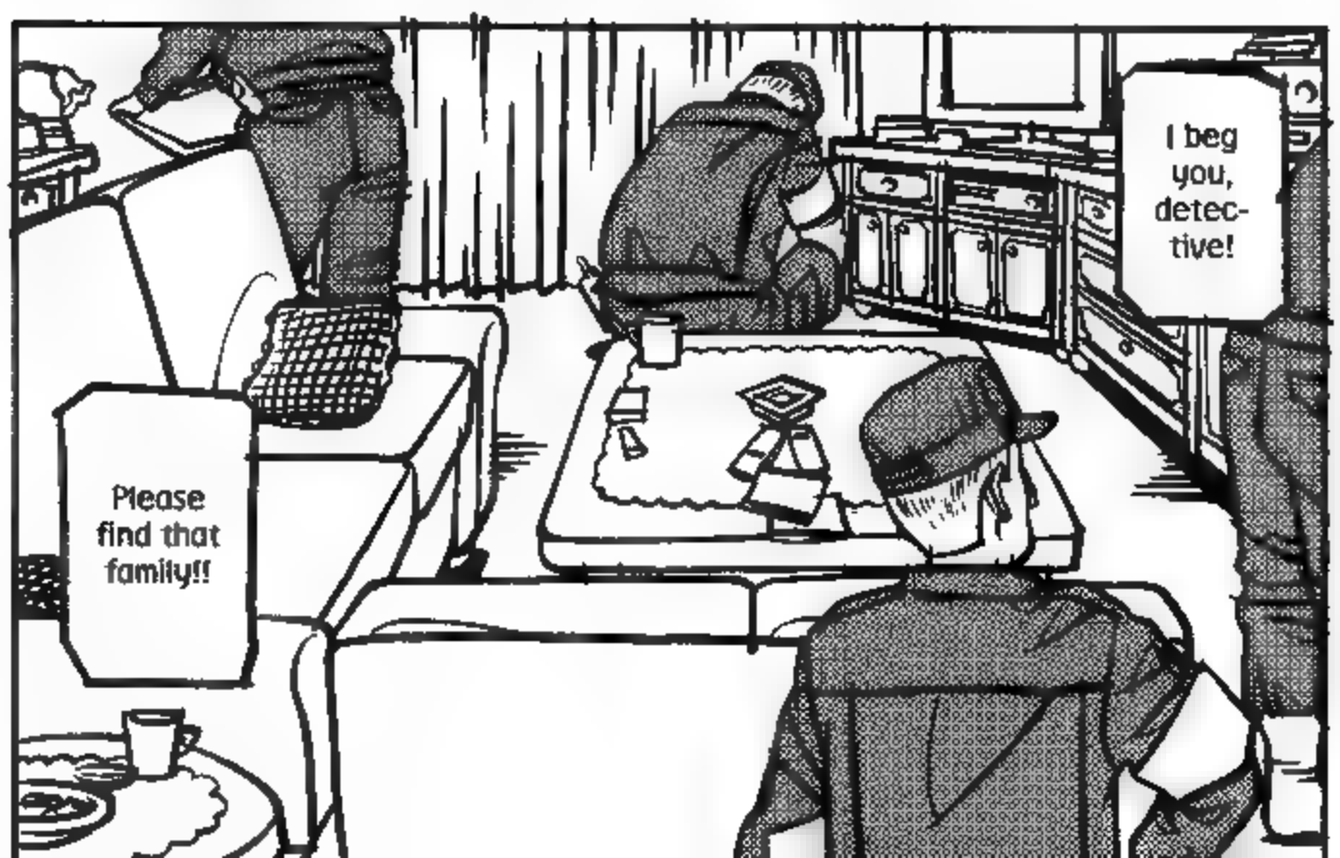
MASAKI, THE HUSBAND, WORKED AS A PIANO TUNER.
HE ALSO TAUGHT CHILDREN HOW TO PLAY THE PIANO AT HIS HOUSE.
HE WAS A VERY KIND TEACHER.
BECAUSE OF HIM, OUR CHILD GREW TO LOVE THE PIANO!
HE SEEMED TO DO A LOT OF HOUSE-WORK AS WELL.
HE ATTENDED THE PARENT TEACHER'S MEETINGS WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST LOOK OF ANNOYANCE.
MR. SUZUSHIRO WAS A GENTLE MAN WHO LOVED HIS FAMILY OVER EVERY THING ELSE.
IF THERE WAS EVER A PERFECT HUSBAND, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN HIM!

BEFORE NORIKO GOT MARRIED, SHE WORKED AS A FLOWER DECORATOR...
THUS, IT DIDN'T COME AS A SURPRISE WHEN THE SUZUSHIROS' FLOWER GARDEN TURNED OUT SO ELEGANT AND BEAUTIFUL.
NORIKO, MR. SUZUSHIRO'S WIFE, WAS QUITE A SOCIAL WOMAN.
CHEERFUL AND FRIENDLY, SHE FIT IN THIS TOWN RIGHT AWAY.
THANKS TO THE SUZUSHIROS...
...THE FLOWER GARDENS OF "SOIL" HAVE BECOME EVEN MORE SPLENDID THAN BEFORE.
NORIKO USED TO INVITE EVERY BODY TO HER FLOWER CARE WORKSHOPS.
SHE WAS KIND OF LIKE THE DARLING OF THE TOWN.

I meant you and your hubby, lady.
I have no knowledge of such thing!
Sir, please stop sexually harrassing people during questioning!
So... What about the sex?
How many times a month?
Excuse me!?
Class 2-C...
Yes, we were in the same class with Mizuki.
I GUESS SHE DID WELL IN SCHOOL... SHE WAS NOT THE BEST STUDENT, BUT YOU COULD ALWAYS FIND HER IN THE HIGHER RANKS.
SHE WAS A SERIOUS TYPE OF GIRL, BUT SHE DID STAND OUT BECAUSE SHE WAS VERY CUTE.

YES, YES... SHE SEEMED TO BE AN INCREDIBLY HARDWORKING STUDENT..
MIZUKI WAS CHEERFUL AND FRIENDLY TO EVERYONE SHE MET, AND HAD A LOT OF FRIENDS.
THE TEACHERS LIKED HER TOO BECAUSE SHE APPLIED HERSELF FULLY TO EVERYTHING SHE DID.
It'd happen during school lessons or even when we were just talking with each other.
Occasionally, she'd just fall asleep from one second to another.
She always woke up almost immediately though.
Oh yeah, that one thing...
Well, there was that one thing about her... It was a bit weird...
That one thing ..?
SHE DID THAT EVEN WHEN WE WERE WALKING ON THE STREET. WHEN THAT HAPPENED, EVERYONE WAS LIKE "HUH?" AND LOOKED BACK AT HER.

Where did she go?
Everything is okay with her, right? Nothing weird happened to her, right?
Do you know what happened to Mizuki, detective?


I beg you, detective!
Please find that family!!

PUFF!
The town council, sir?
Errm ...?
I mean, is there *anything* in this town that *don't* go by the book!?
PLOP
Yep. Lookin' 'round here, everything's so sickeningly clean...
TUP
So I guess this town must be run by a bunch of rule nazis.
!
There're no such things...
No, sir...

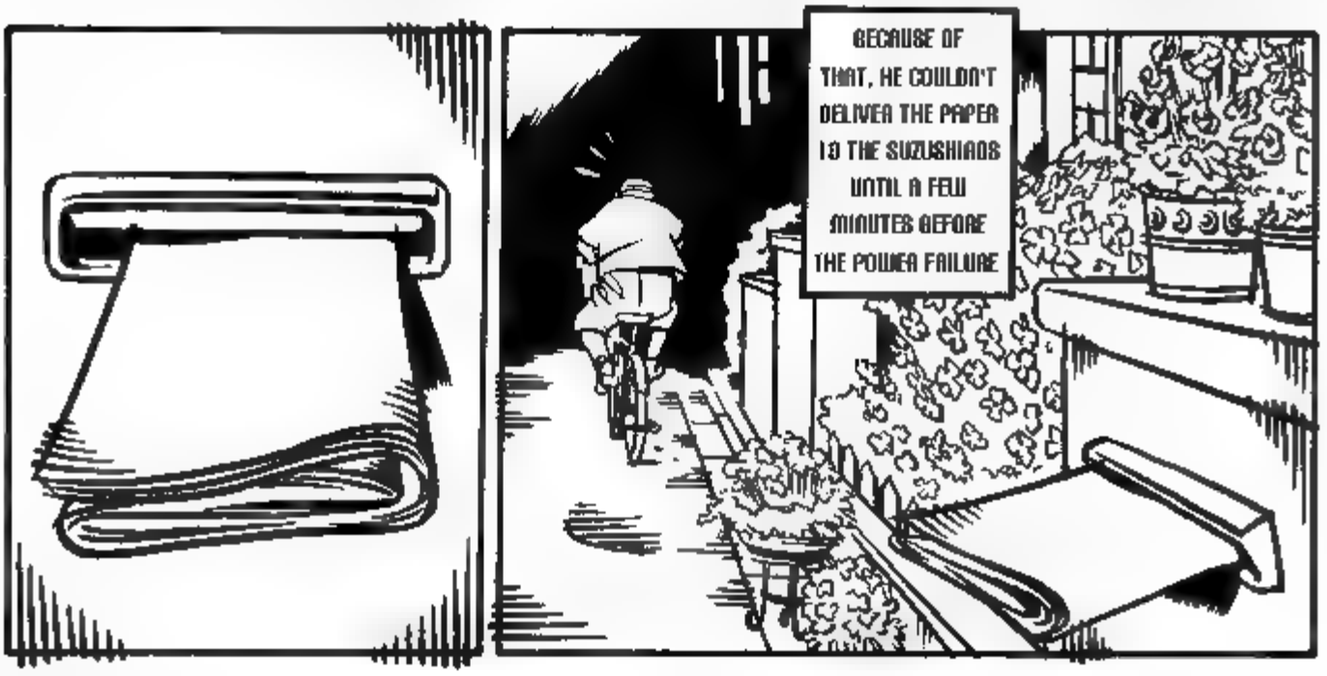
Good day, Mrs. Miyahara.
Oh my God! I-I'm terribly sorry, sir!
I wasn't aware of that!
Ma'am, your flowers are wilted.
Oh, good day, sir...
Those flowers represent Soil's happiness. Please don't forget that.
Seeing wilted flowers will make people sad.
I'm counting on you, ma'am.

But there's *nothing* here. Which is almost unnatural.
Even if removed, the flowers should've at least left some root fragments behind.
No... This is really odd...
Have you found some-thing?
CRACKLE
CRACKLE

Shit! We got bawled out!
Let's scoot!
Hey, this is restricted area, can't you read? Go home, kiddos!
立入禁止*
* Keep out
Ugh!!
POW
Oh, Mr. Yokoi, Ms. Onoda.
Good morning ...
Don't you *dare* chat with the townsfolk about this case, asshole!
Whuh... Why did you do that!?
Owww ...

My ass! Are you tryin' to become one of "them"!?
Don't trust anyone!!
I thought that the people here might come up with something that will help solve this case.
I... I apologize, sir.
I...
I'm sorry ...
No, sir.
Anything new?
Apart from the "salt," we haven t found anything suspicious so far
ACCOADING TO THE PAPER BOY'S TESTI MONY...
Hey, sarge ...
It seems almost safe to say that this family was still here shortly before the power failure.

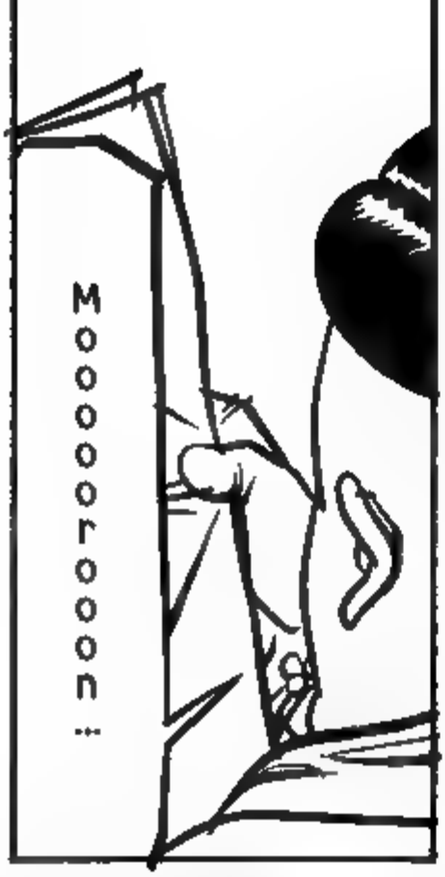
THAT DAY'S EVENING PAPER ARRIVED AT THE NEWSDEALER'S WITH CONSIDERABLE DELAY DUE TO PROBLEMS ON THE DELIVERY ROUTE.

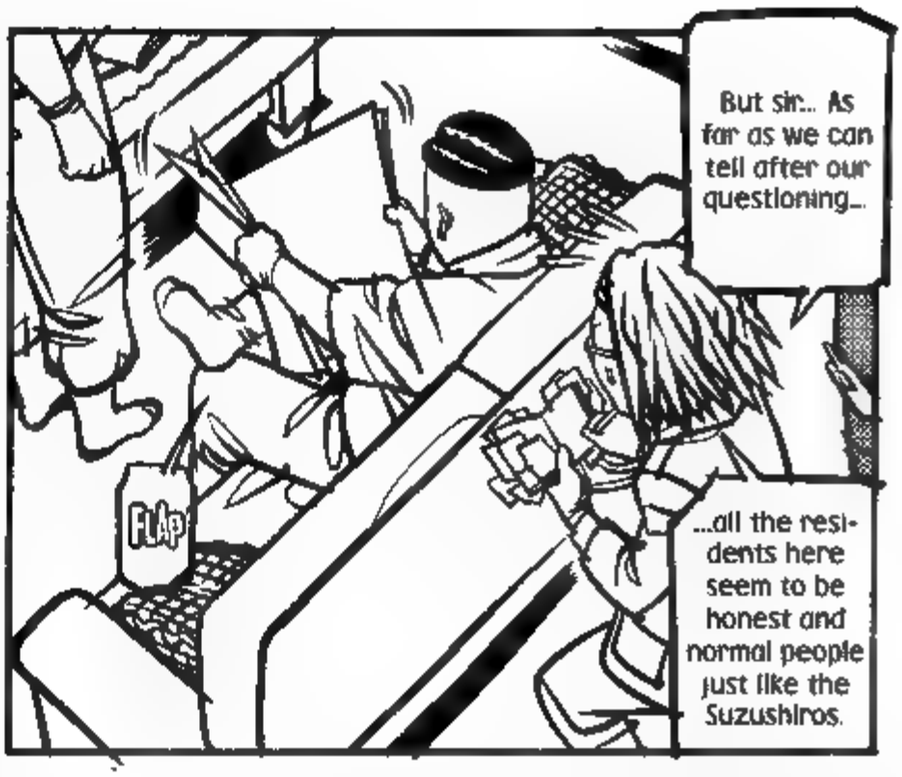

BECAUSE OF THAT, HE COULDN'T DELIVER THE PAPER TO THE SUZUSHIANS UNTIL A FEW MINUTES BEFORE THE POWER FAILURE

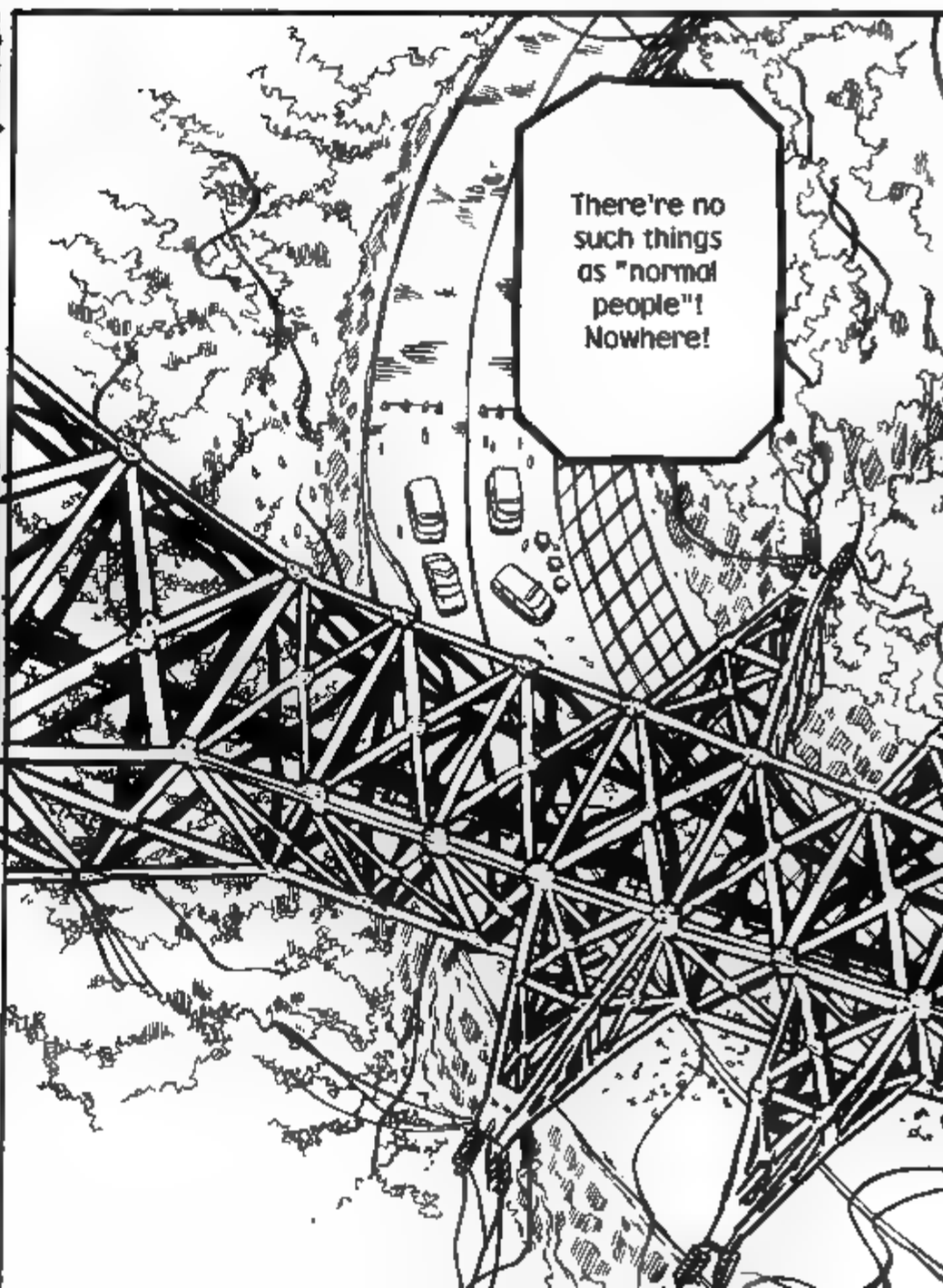
I see. And that day's evening paper is here.
Which means that this family's disappearance took place *after* the power failure.

...this was a planned abduction that included the power failure caused by the transmission tower's collapse?
So, that is to say...
A sole person could never have pulled the stunt with the salt heap on the schoolyard.
My thought exactly.
The suspicion's hardening that we're dealing with an organized crime.
...abduct this normal and virtuous family?
But why would "they"...
...and call the whole group "Shocker," eh!? *
Great! Why don't we add the wolf man and the octopus man to the mix...
They? So you're sayin' that the "scaled man" was part of the gang too?
I have the impression that Sergeant Yokoi is suspecting the local residents, but that is absurd...
I don't know what you're talkin' about.
Hah?
SUFF SUFF

* A reference to *Kamen Rider*, a popular Japanese super hero franchise. "Shocker" is the name of an evil army which strives for world domination. It employs a horde of villains (like the wolf man and the octopus man) who fight against Kamen Rider


Mooooooon...


But sir... As far as we can tell after our questioning...
FLAP
...all the residents here seem to be honest and normal people just like the Suzushiros.


There're no such things as "normal people"! Nowhere!

Aaaahhh!!
Uwaaahh !!
Aaah!!
Every-thing okay? You hurt?
What're you doing, idiot!?
He...

CRAK
CRAK
H HOW
CRAK

SOIL
Block 1-3 [End]

SOIL
Block 1-4 [(Investigation)]

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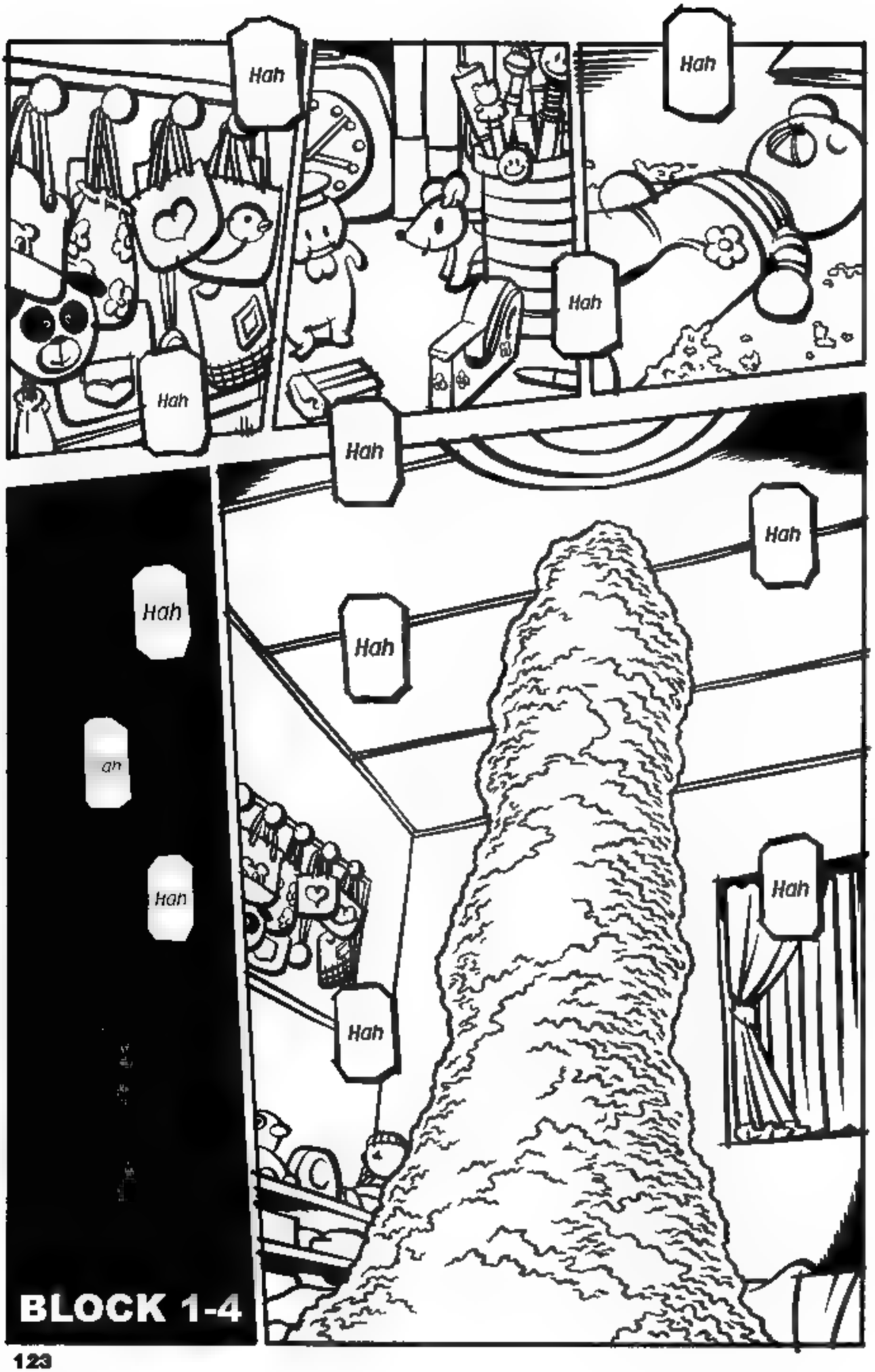
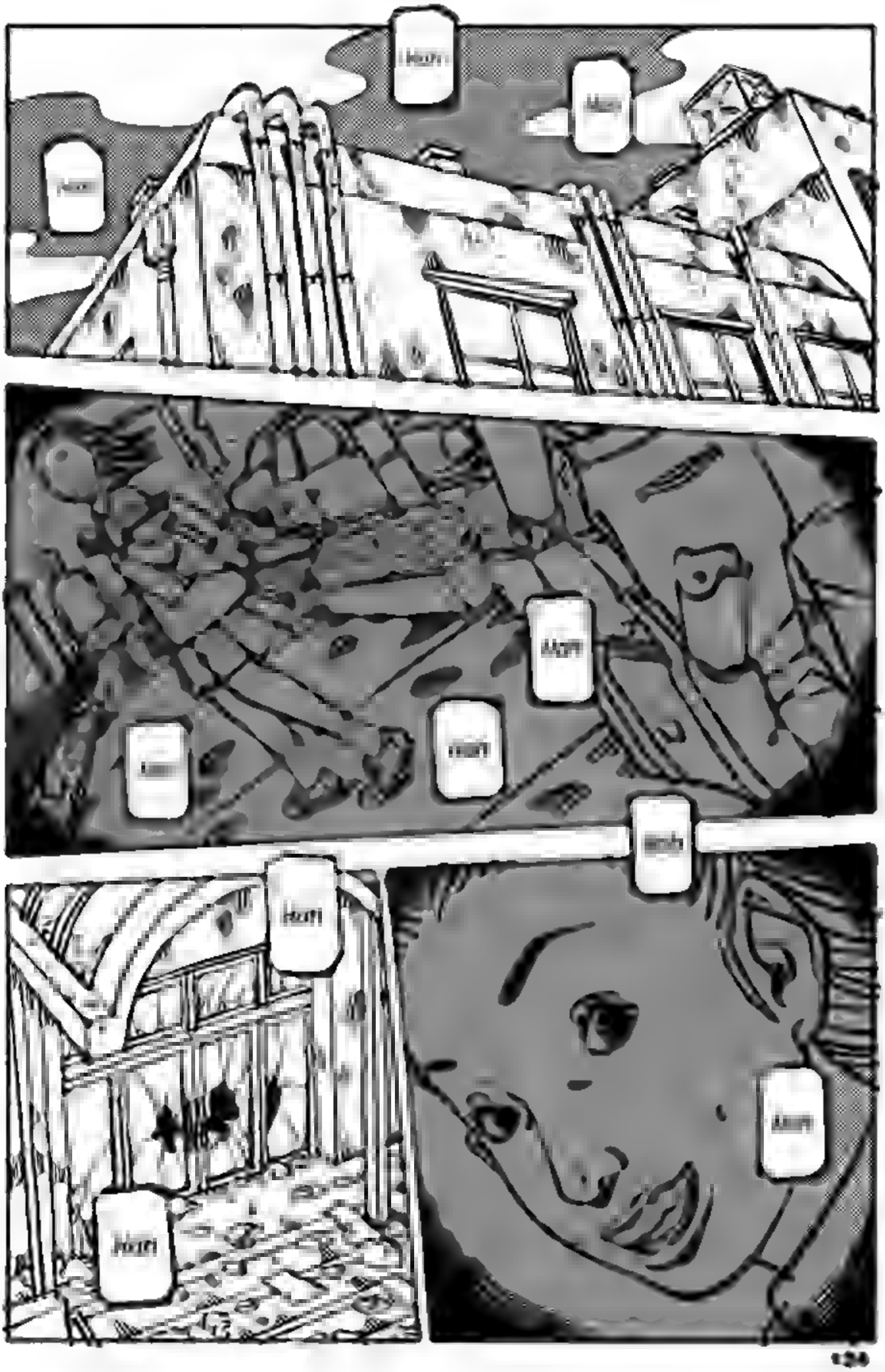
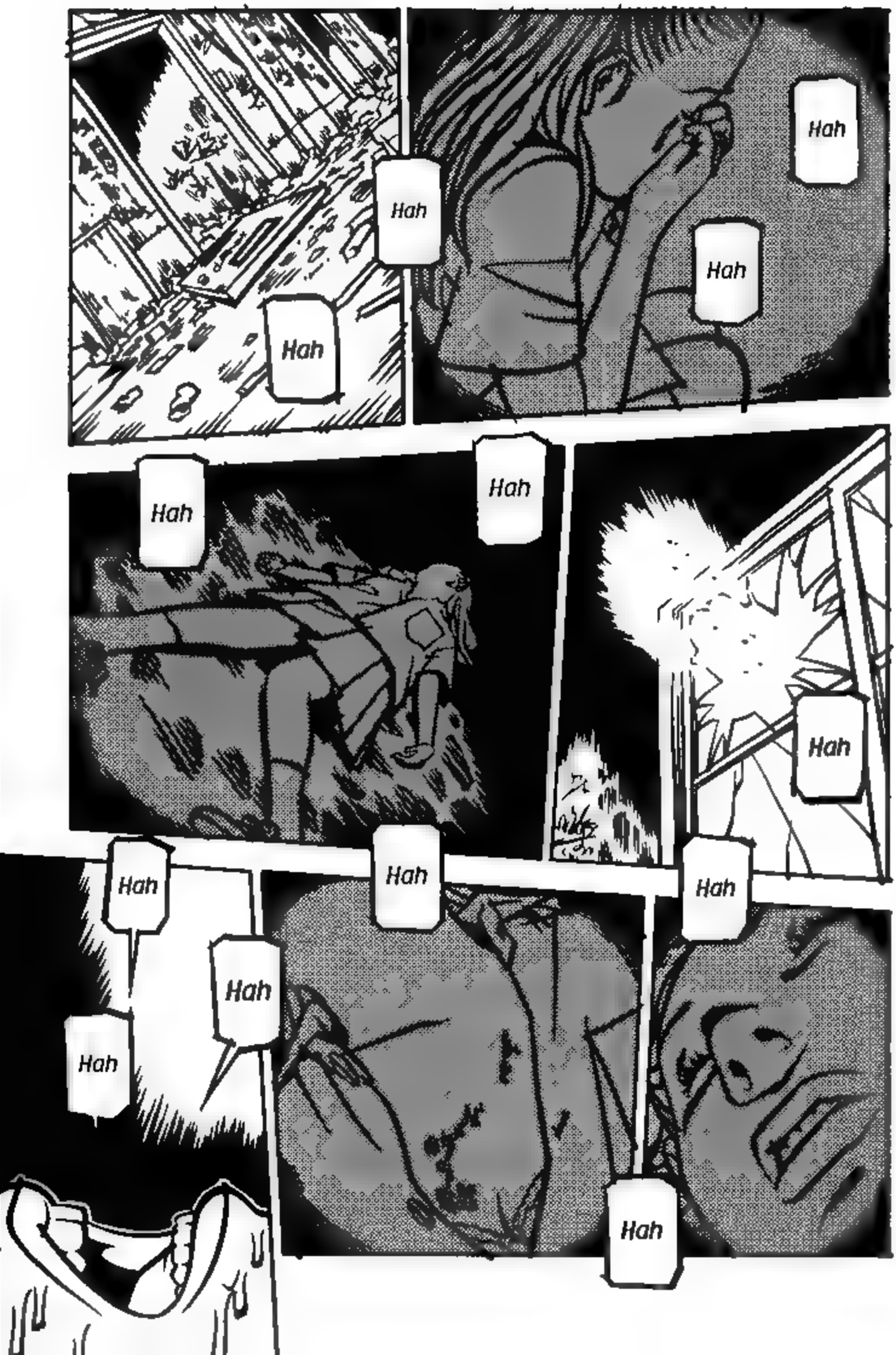

Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
BLOCK 1-4


Mom
Mom
Mom
Mom
Mom
Mom
Mom
Mom
Mom


Hah
Hah
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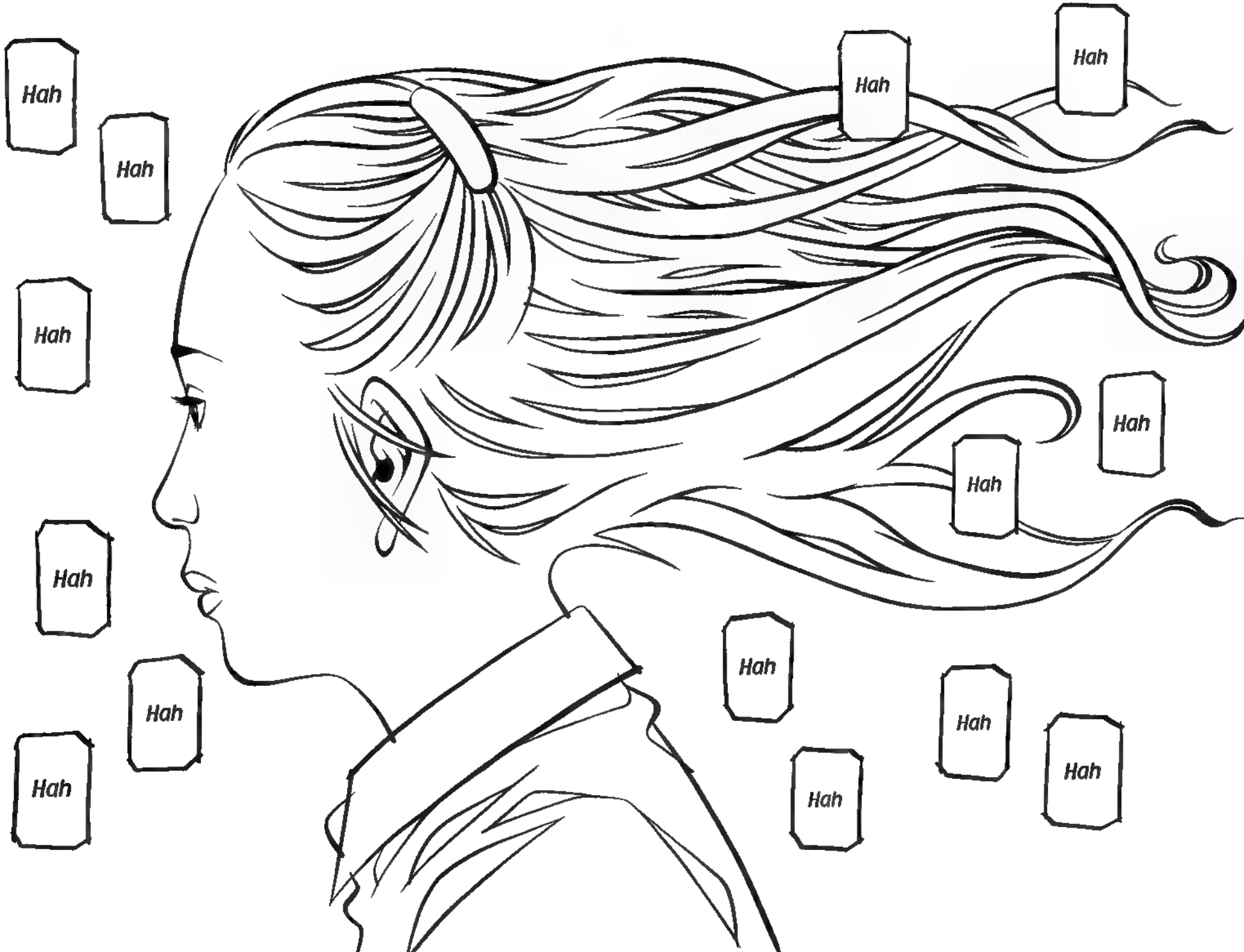
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah


Hah
Hah
Hah
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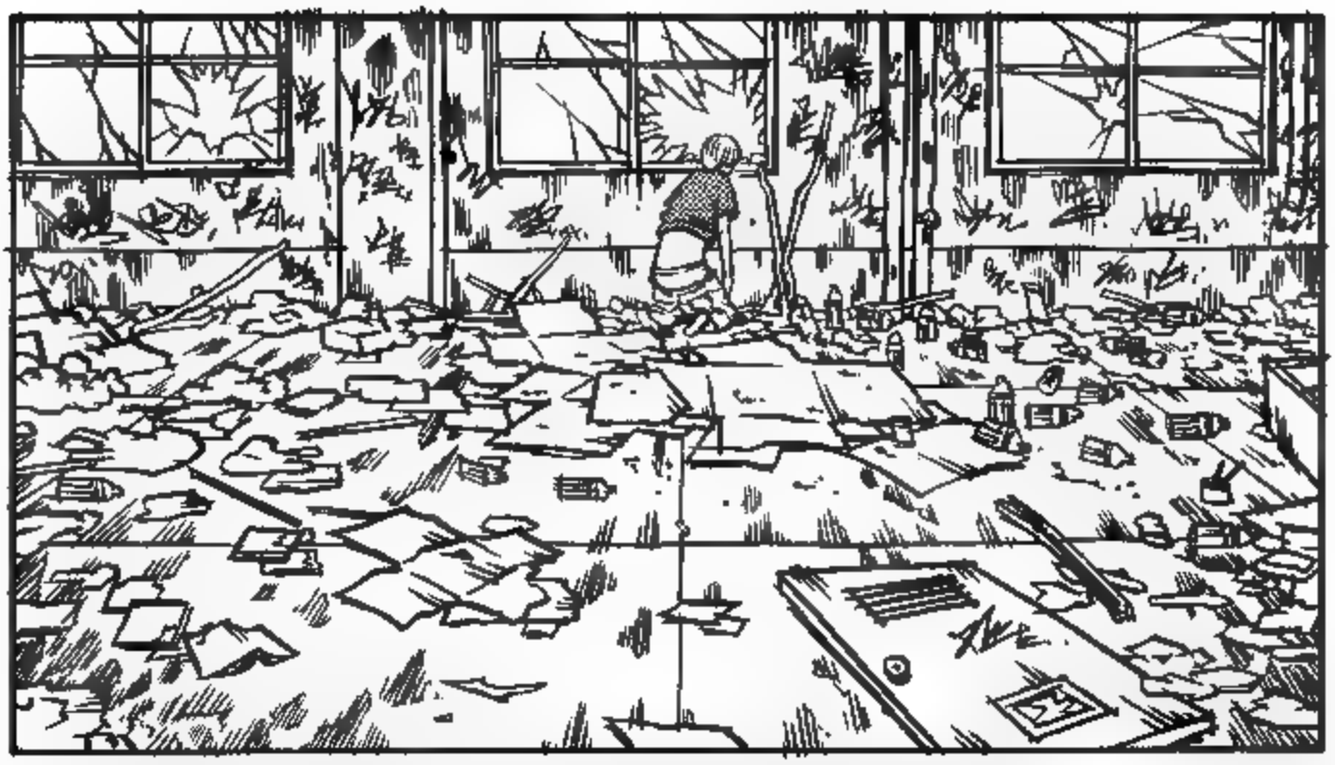
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah

An abandoned building...?
HALT
Yes, sir! If I'm not mistaken ...
...that building was designated to become a hospital...
Aaaaah!
FLAP
FLAP
Um, well, you see, ten years ago...
..."Soil New Town" was developed as a joint venture project between the local government and a major construction company.



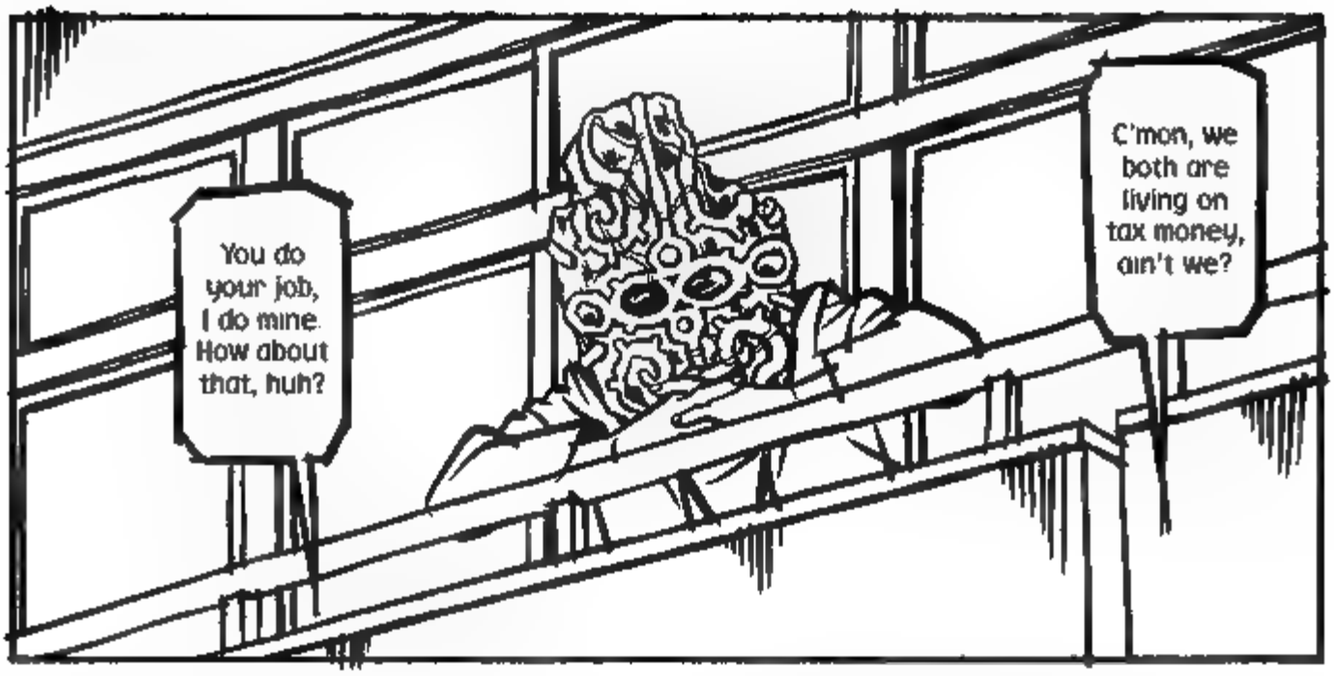
[(Investigation)]

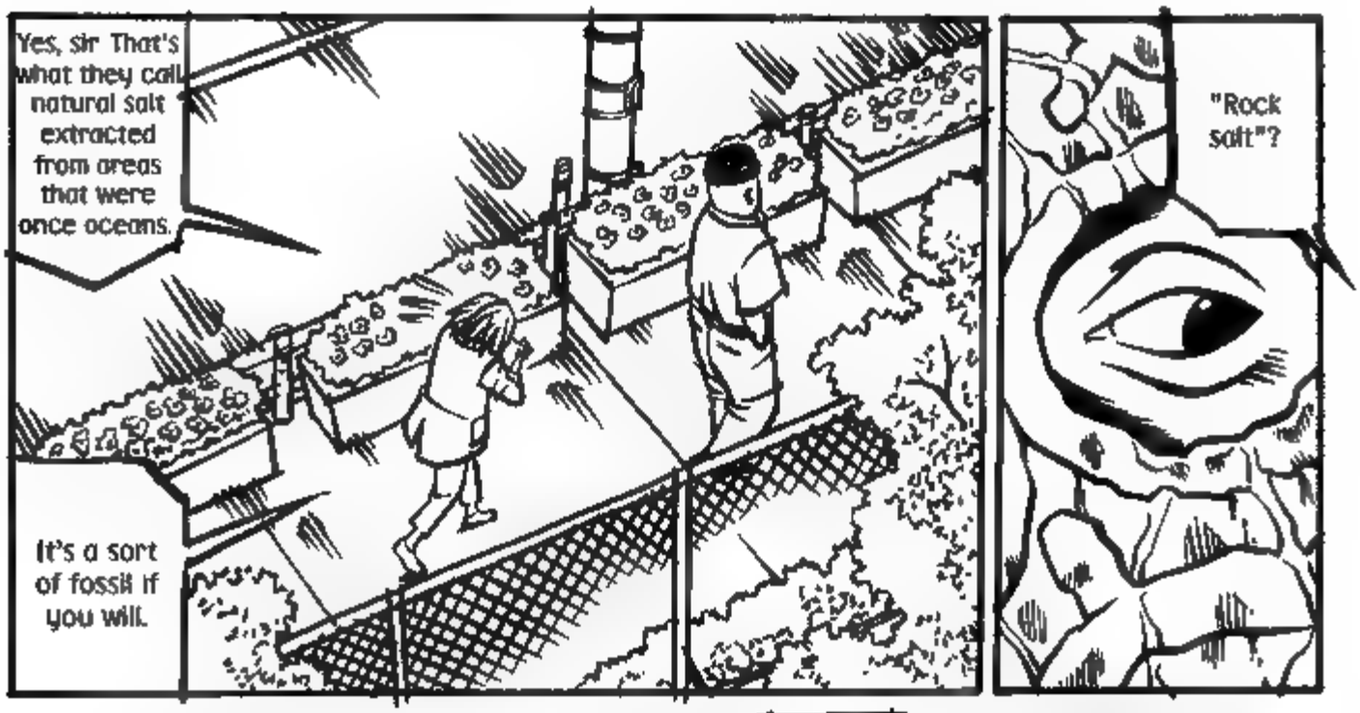
The Britons did not dismount when ordered to do so, as was the custom when feudal lords passed by in those times...
...Lord Hisamitsu Shimazu* passed through in the other direction with his guards.
We As those British subjects passed through the village of Namamugi...
...and were attacked for disrespecting Shimazu.

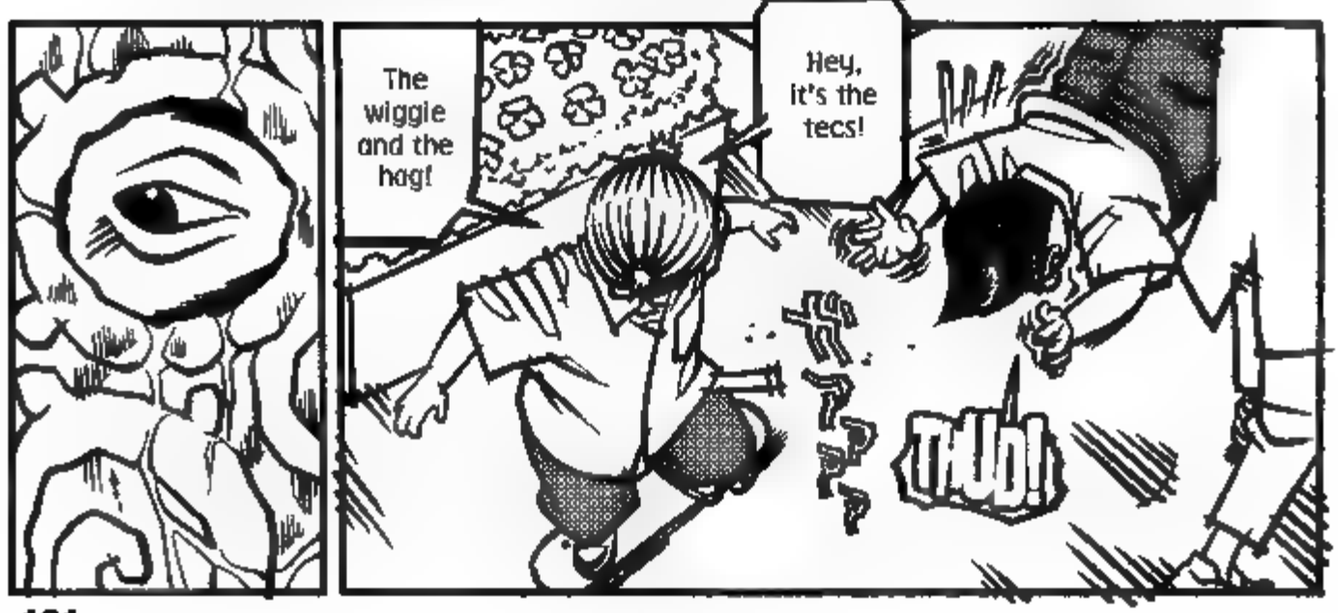
* The feudal lord (daimyô) of Satsuma, an old province of Japan that is now the western half of Kagoshima prefecture on the island of Kyûshû.

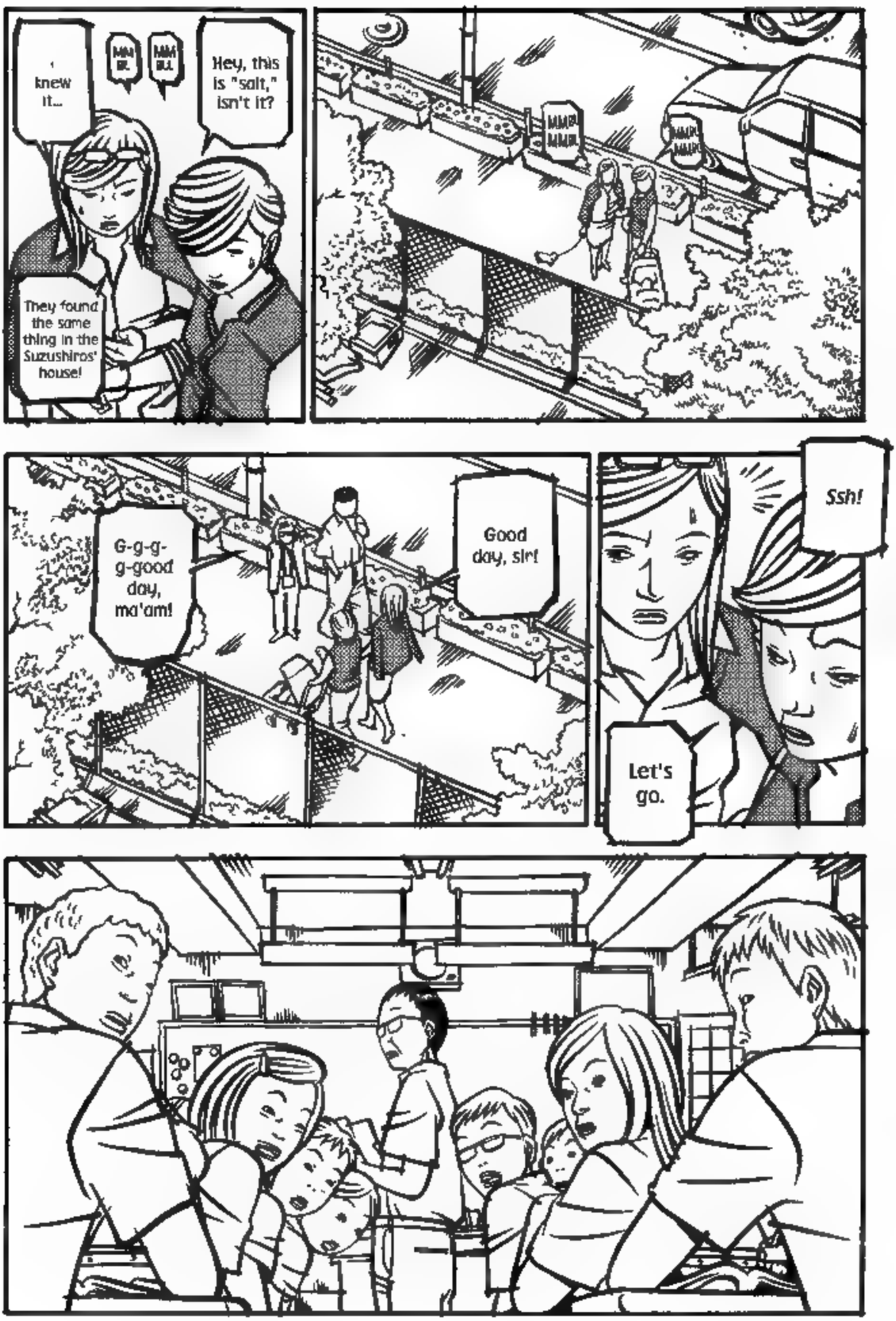
This is called the "Namamugi incident"... *
I'm asking for "it" to be removed immediately!!
Hey, are you listening to me!?
How am I supposed to teach sports with this "thing" on the schoolyard, huh!?
Officer, I'm asking you something!

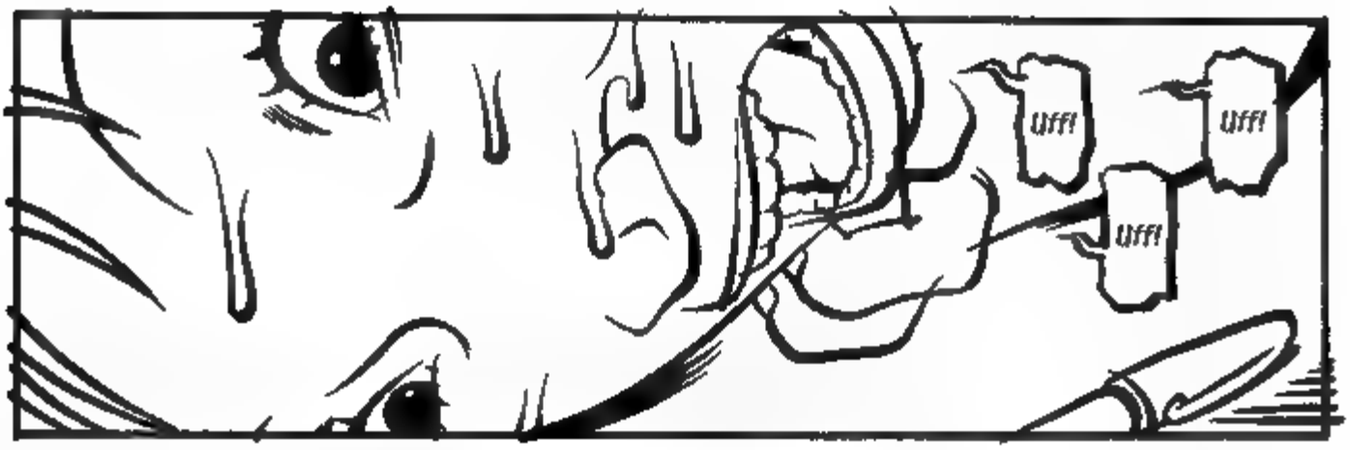
* The Namamugi Incident (生麦事件 / Namamugi jiken) was a samurai attack on foreign nationals in Japan on September 14, 1862, which resulted in the British naval bombardment of Kagoshima in 1863. That incident became the basis of James Clavell's novel *Gaijin*.


You do your job, I do mine. How about that, huh?
C'mon, we both are living on tax money, ain't we?


Yes, sir. That's what they call natural salt extracted from areas that were once oceans.
It's a sort of fossil if you will.
"Rock salt"?


The wiggle and the hag!
Hey, it's the tecs!
THUD!


I knew it...
MM MM
MM MM
Hey, this is "salt," isn't it?
They found the same thing in the Suzushiros' house!
MMM MMM
MMM MMM
G-g-g-g-good day, ma'am!
Good day, sir!
Ssh!
Let's go.

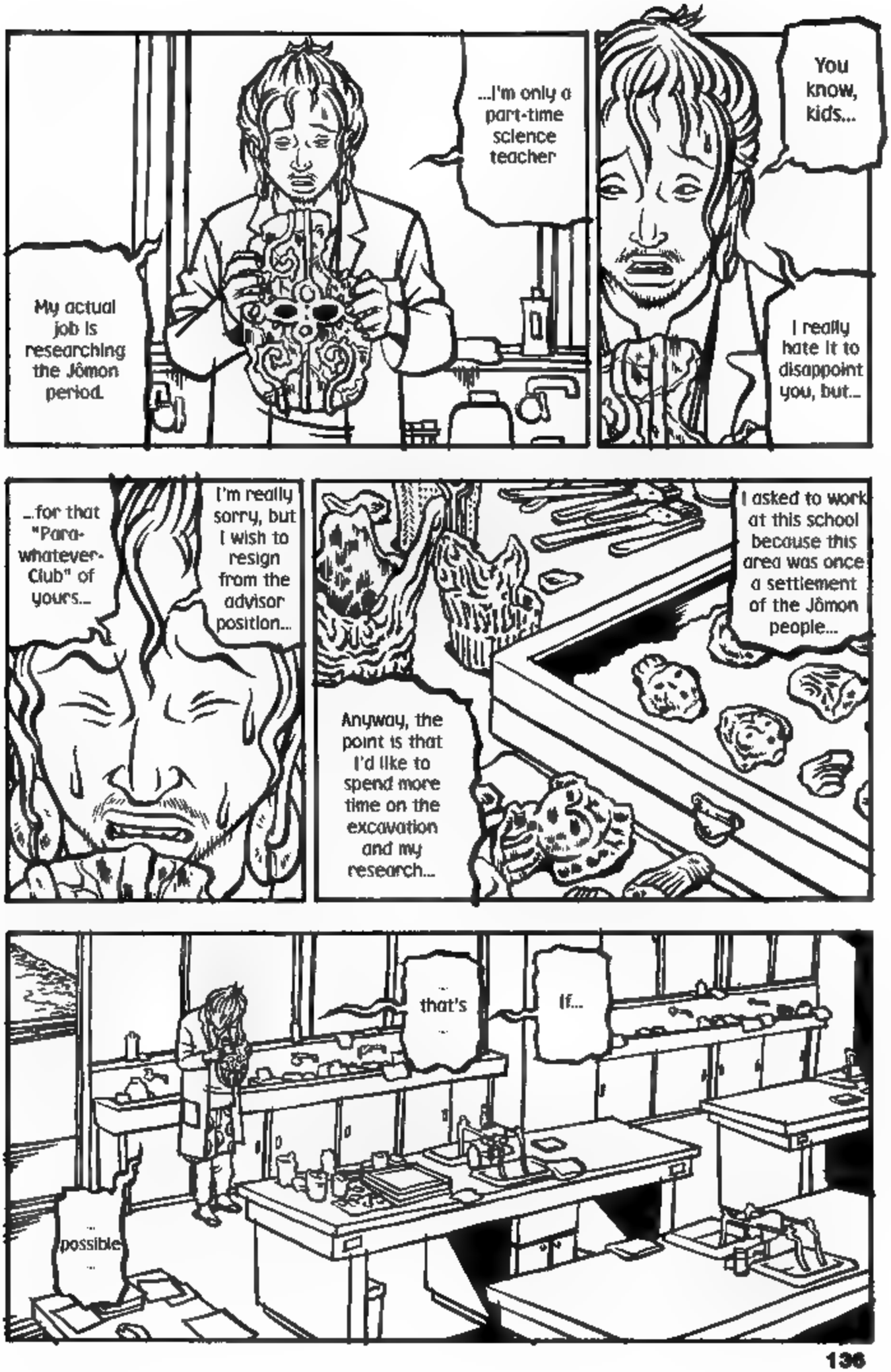


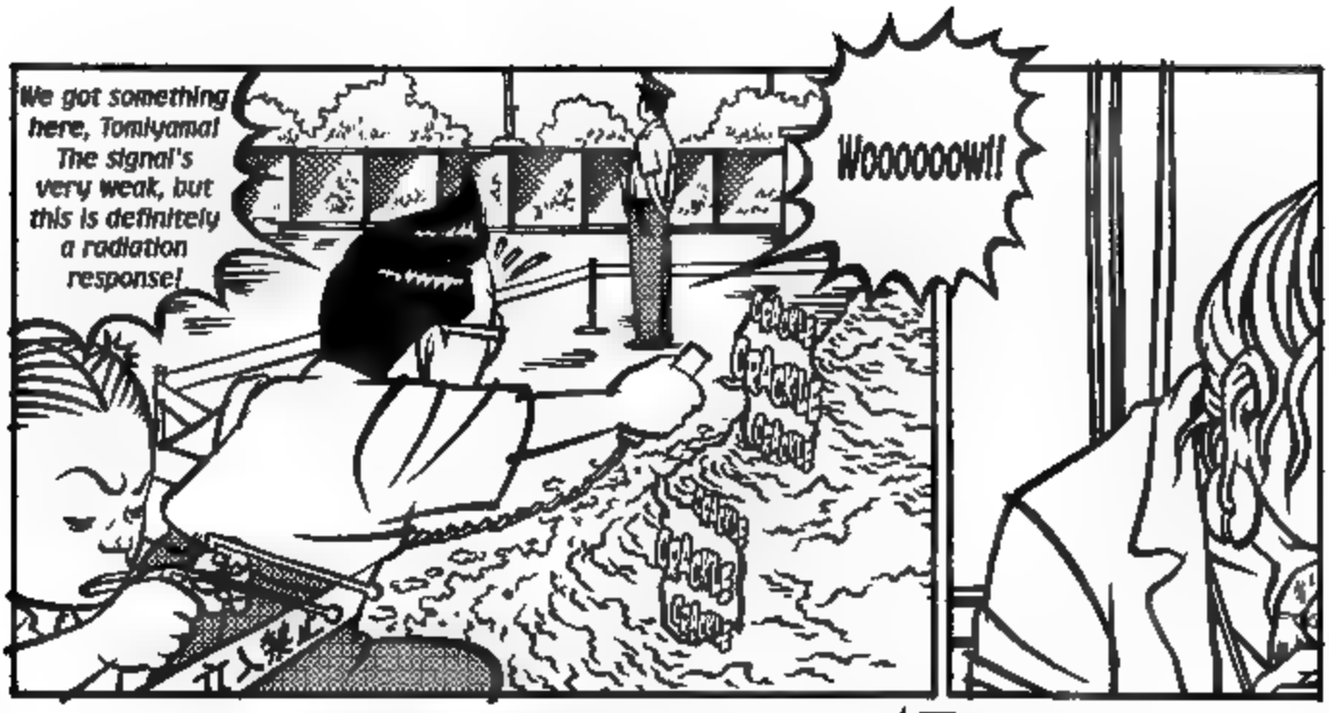
* A quote from a poem by Misao FUJIMURA, an 18 year-old elite student who committed philosophical suicide at Nikko's Kegon Falls in May, 1903. The poem, which was left behind as a suicide note, is believed to express Fujimura's distress at the arrogance implicit in modern scientific attempts to explain away the mysteries of the world.

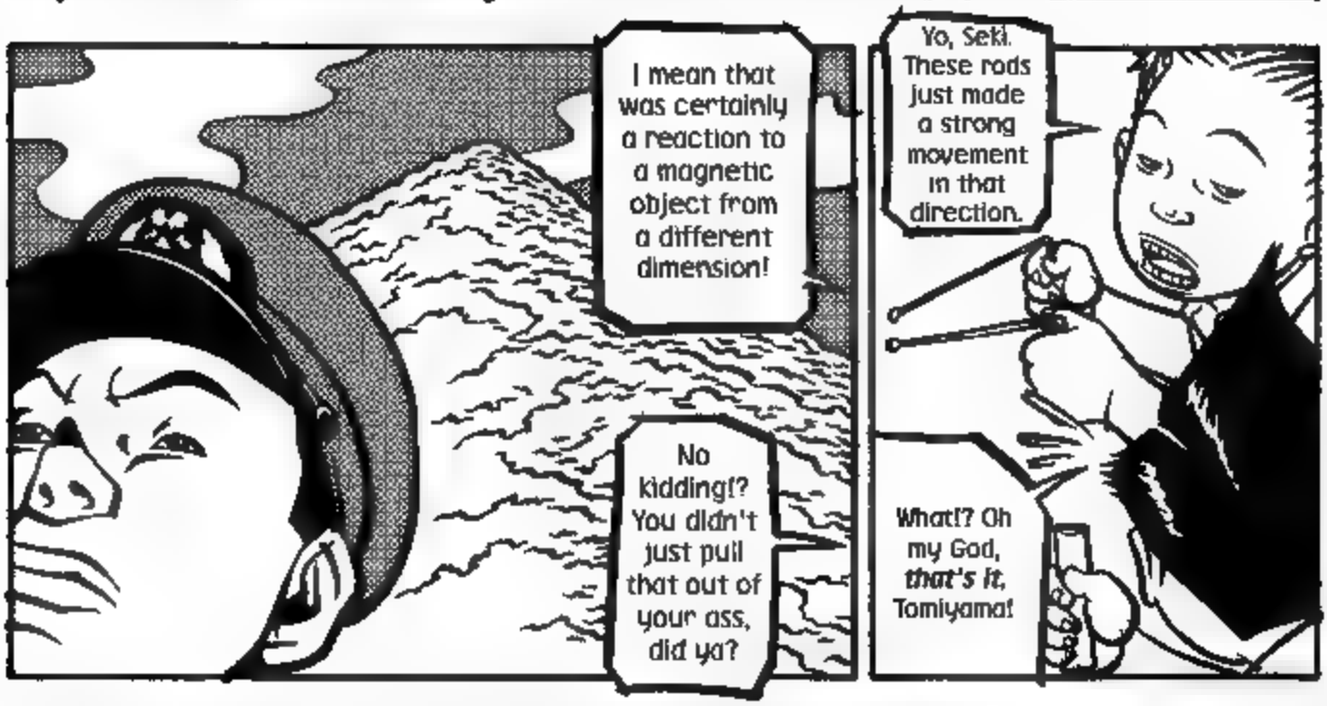
Uwaaahhhh!!
SASH
Aaaaaaahh!!
TUP!
CLK
You don't know what you're talking about! This is a unique exemplar!
Baah, so what!? Just dig up another one then!
It used to belong to a shaman from the Latest Jômon.*
W-w-watch out, would you!!
Do you know how rare it is to find an exemplar that is this well-preserved!?

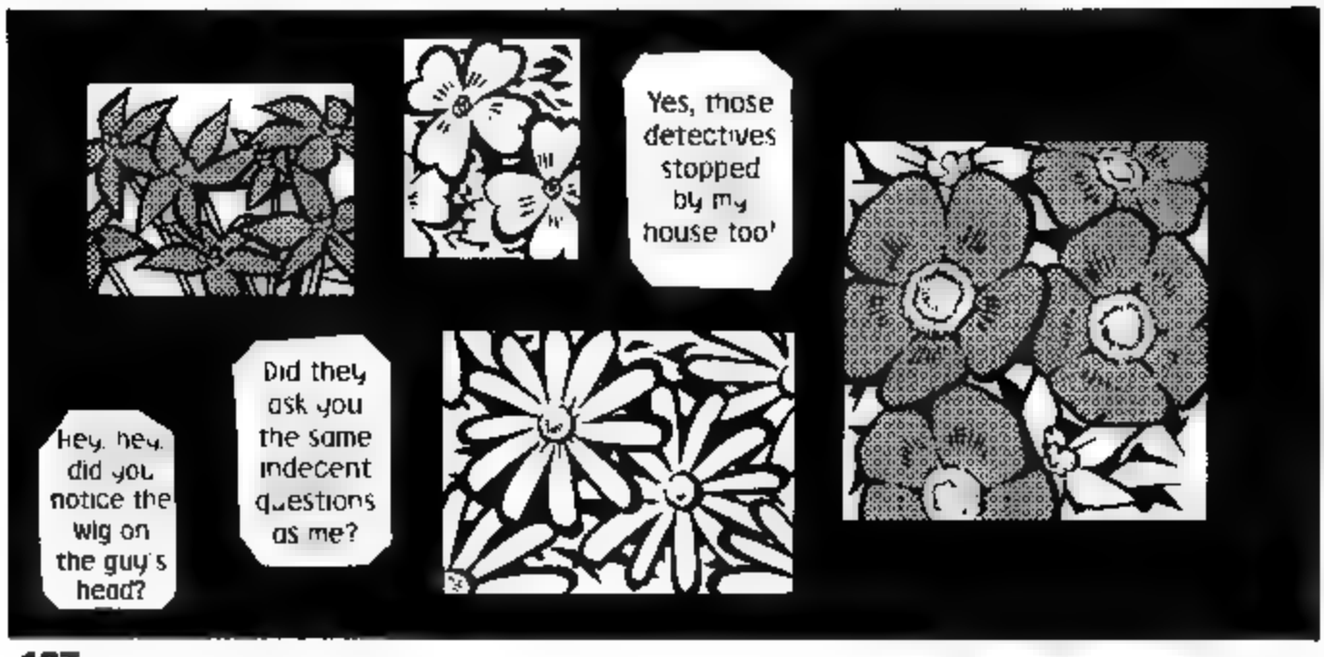
* Latest Jômon (approx. 1000 - 300 BC): also known as the "Final Jômon." Refer to the following web site for more specific information: http://www.nbz.or.jp/eng/final.htm

He said aliens were responsible for the latest incidents.
Seki's sure a pitiful kid, doncha think, Mr. T?
SKRKE
SKRKE
It's my private property!
Wait a sec, that thing's mine!
Hey, I found the Geiger counter!
SKRKE
SKRKE
Remember that crane fly the other day? You said it would be a mutated giant mosquito that came in contact with industrial waste water
SKRKE
SKRKE
Stop eating your boogers, for Christ's sake!
I wonder if hangin' out with you will make me look like a fool too.
I haven't concluded as such yet, Tomiyama!
But it's pretty obvious that those phenomena exceed our human understanding!
We? That doesn't mean me, does it?
SKRKE
SKRKE
SKRKE
This is *the* chance for us as the "Paranormal Phenomena Research Club" to get into action, Mr. Tokita!
We'll locate the missing Suzushiro family using a different approach than the police. We'll solve this riddle our own way!


My actual job is researching the Jômon period.
...I'm only a part-time science teacher
You know, kids...
I really hate it to disappoint you, but...
...for that "Para-whatever-Club" of yours...
I'm really sorry, but I wish to resign from the advisor position...
Anyway, the point is that I'd like to spend more time on the excavation and my research...
I asked to work at this school because this area was once a settlement of the Jômon people...
... possible ...
... that's ...
If...

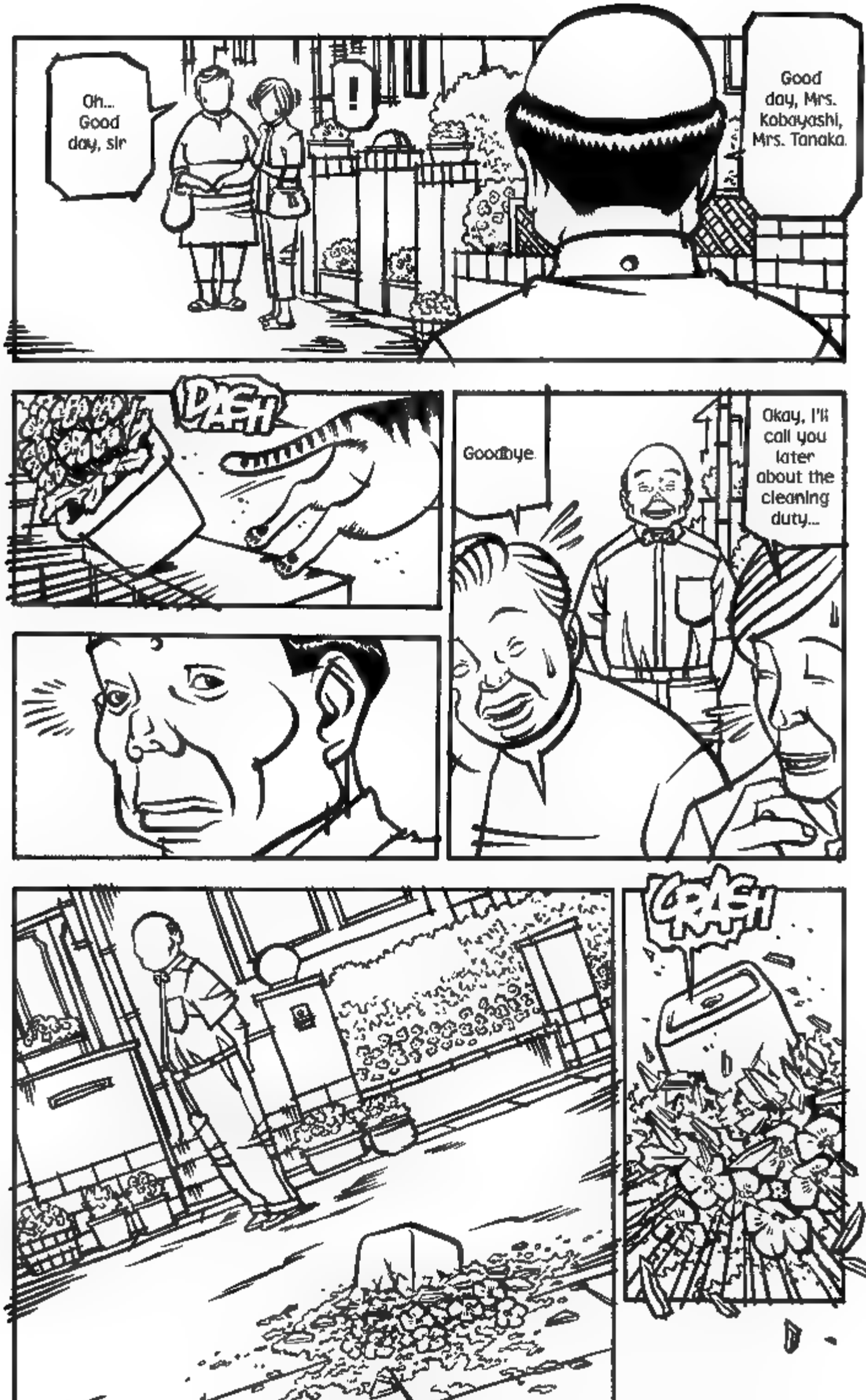

We got something here, Tomiyama! The signal's very weak, but this is definitely a radiation response!
Wooooooow!!


I mean that was certainly a reaction to a magnetic object from a different dimension!
No kidding!? You didn't just pull that out of your ass, did ya?
Yo, Seki. These rods just made a strong movement in that direction.
What!? Oh my God, *that's it*, Tomiyama!


Yes, those detectives stopped by my house too!
Did they ask you the same indecent questions as me?
Hey, hey, did you notice the wig on the guy's head?

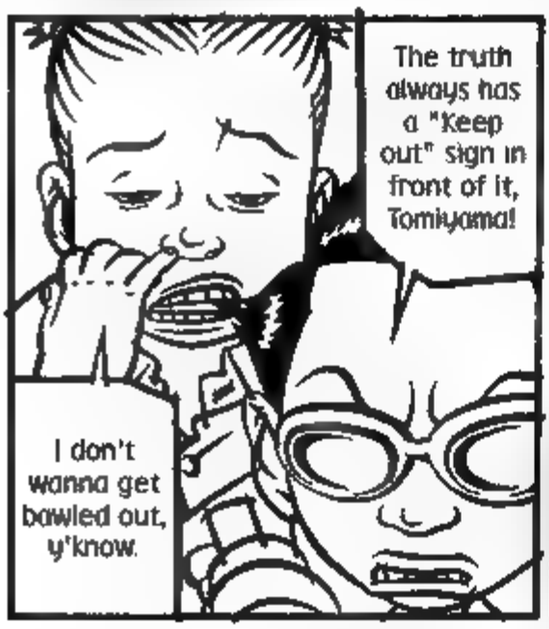
Almost everyone had a motive for harming them...
Right?
After all, it's the Suzushiros we're talking about!
In any case, we cannot afford to be indiscreet
I wish they'd disappear for good and never come back.
I wouldn't care if they're dead!
My God! How cruel!
Giggle Giggle Giggle
Huh? Did I say such a thing?
Who? Who said it'd serve them right?
Giggle Giggle Giggle
We all would end up in big trouble.
Indeed. What if they happen to find out about me too?
Yes, that would make things "complicated."
But in case they are found...

Sure, I feel sorry for the girl...
They just got what they deserved!
...but she was *their* daughter after all.
Huh? Weren't you two good friends?
Not really, we just happened to take the same way home.
Yeah, girl's lost one or two of her marbles.
I heard Mizuki was a regular visitor to the school counselor's office?
Giggle Giggle
Hey, don't look at me like that!
Everybody in town could be the culprit.
And I'm sure I'm not the only one who thinks this way.
I, too, blame Mr Suzushiro for what happened.
That's just how things work at this place
Right?
We had *no* choice but to be friendly to them...
This kind of thing was bound to happen someday...


Oh... Good day, sir
Good day, Mrs. Kobayashi, Mrs. Tanaka.
DASH
Goodbye.
Okay, I'll call you later about the cleaning duty...
CRASH

Sergeant Yokoi, you can't keep sexually harassing our questionees like that!
Shuddup, will ya! I just *hate* dealin' with straight people like 'em!
Hey Seki, ya think mankind's about to face their downfall?
Every-one's actin' like a goddamn saint. I can't read their mind at all.
Huh? Since when did these things get "force detectors" as a name?
We've gotta go in the direction the force detectors point to!
More concen-tration, Tomiyama!
I guess it'd be boring to be the only survivor left after every-body else dies...
But I sure wouldn't want to be the first sucker to bite the dust!

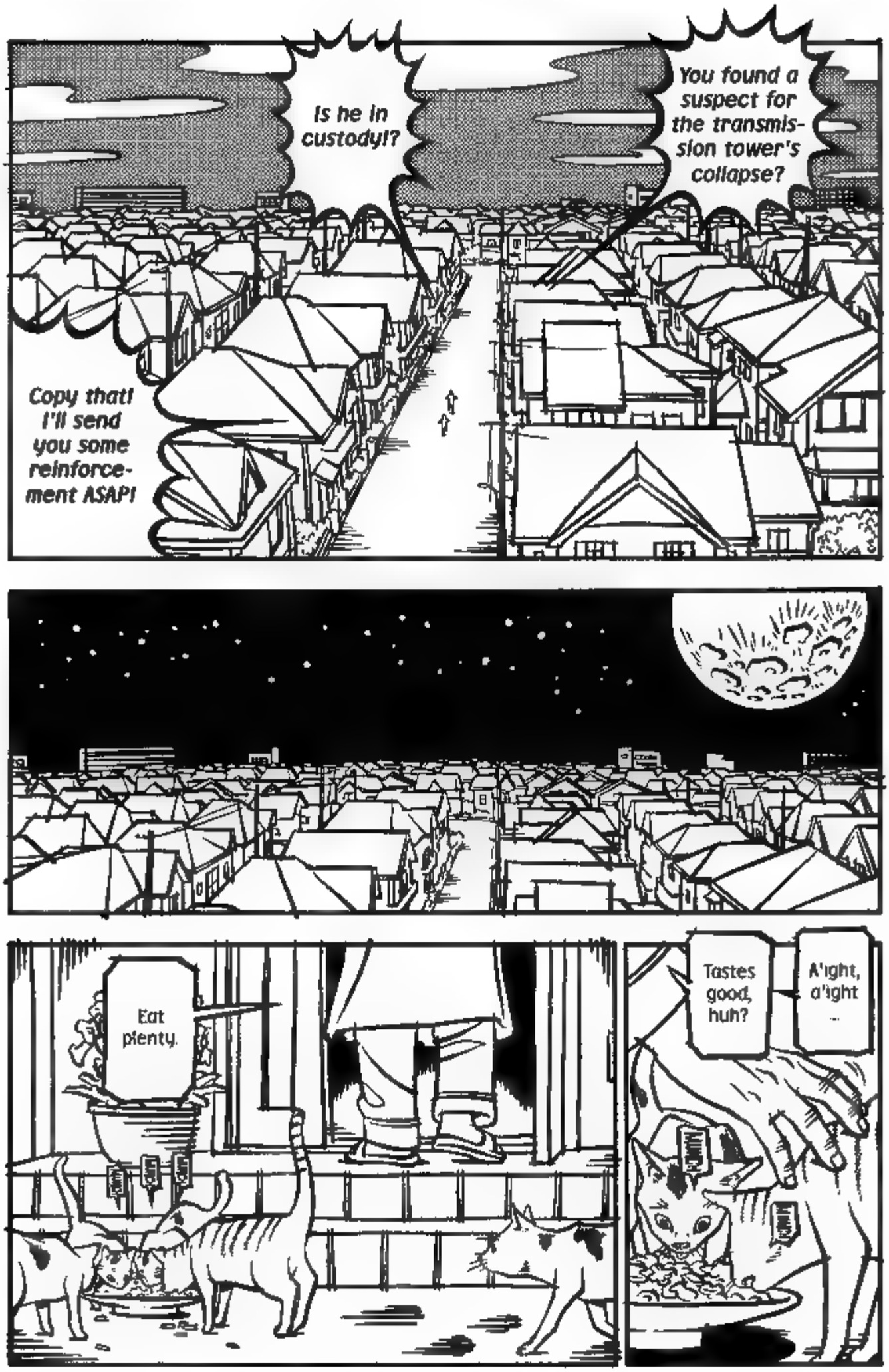
* Keep out ** Police

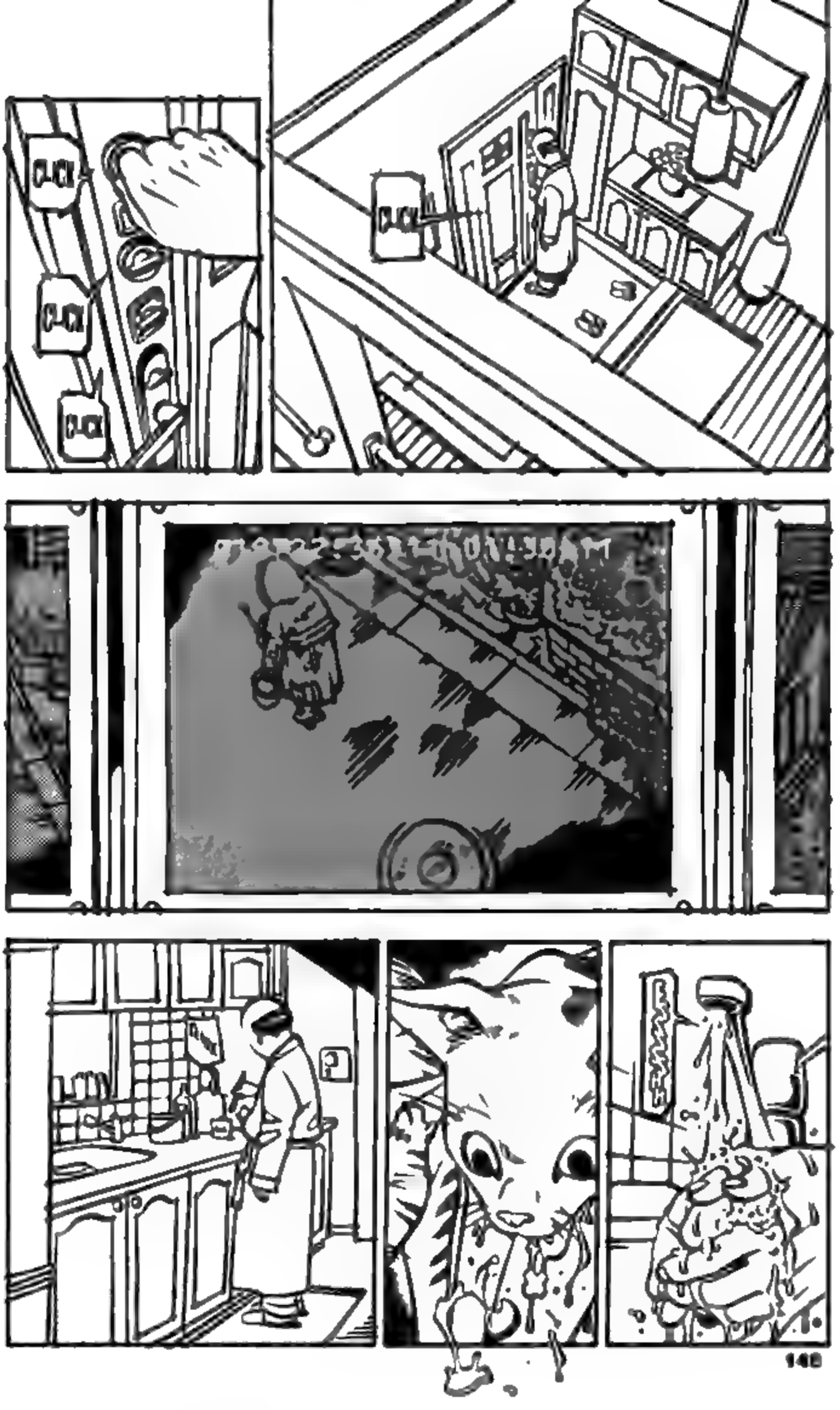


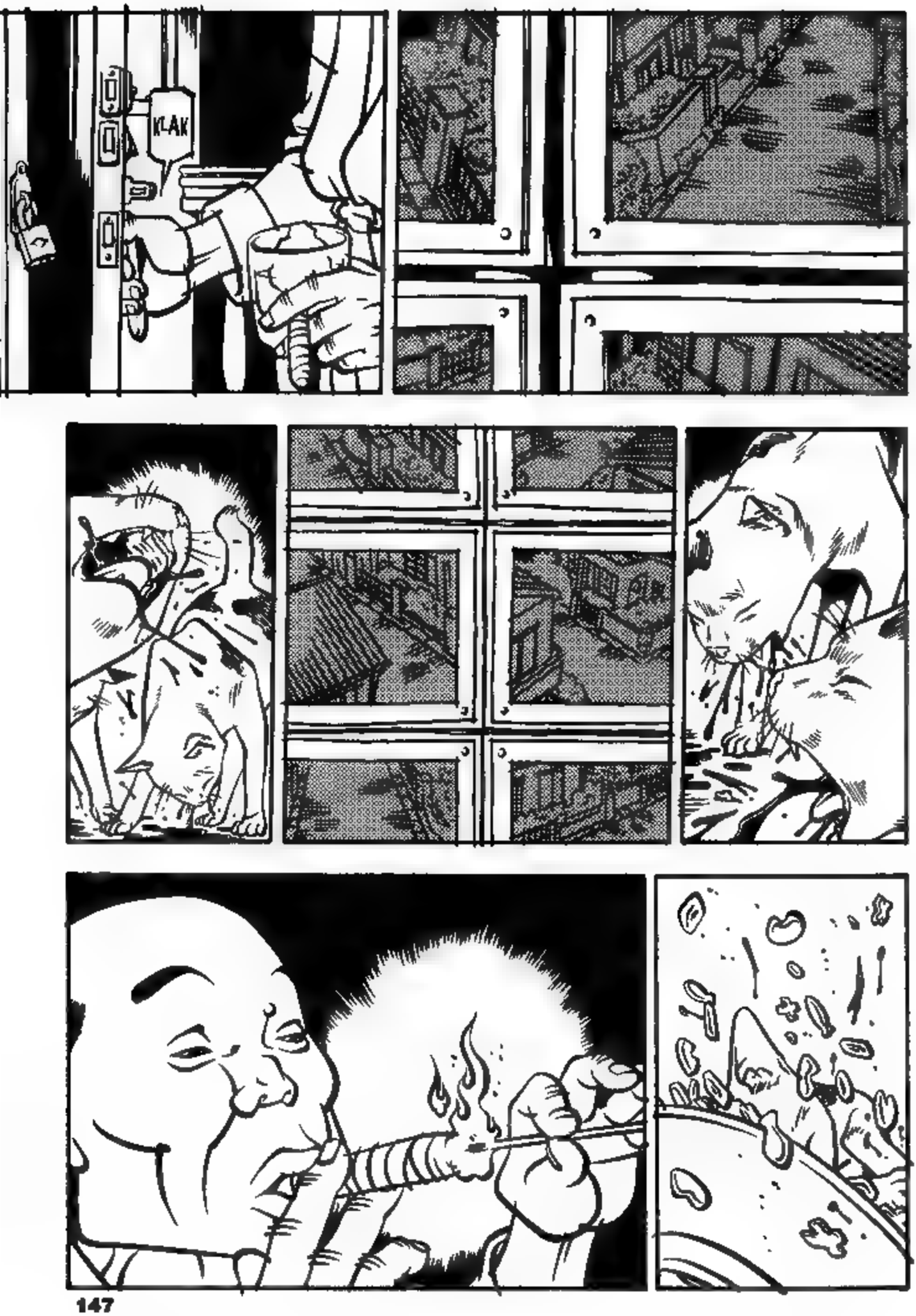
I'm also getting a radiation response, Tomiyama!
Seki, look! The rods are moving!
C.P.
I knew it! Something paranormal is at work here!
Uh-oh!
Good morning ...
Oh, Mr Yokoi, Ms. Onoda.
Ugh!!
警察署
Let's scoot!
Shit! We got bawled out!
Hey, this is restricted area, can't you read? Go home, kiddos!

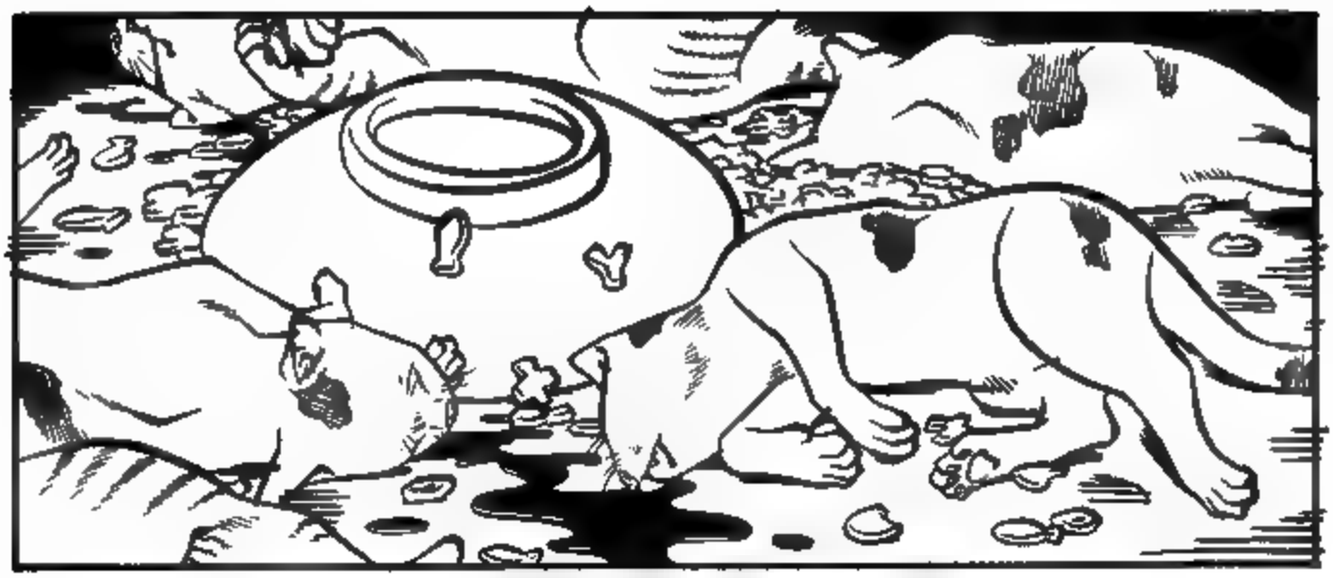
This could be a cover-up operation for a huge conspiracy!
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
We just had a run-in with the government authorities, Tomiyama!
We? That doesn't mean me, does it?
ドヨーン
Wh-what's up with you? You're sounding like a wimp!
No kidding? Let's call this a quit then!
We, the "Paranormal Phenomena Research Club," exist to investigate the great riddles out there...
What!?
Roger! The 1st Division* is here!

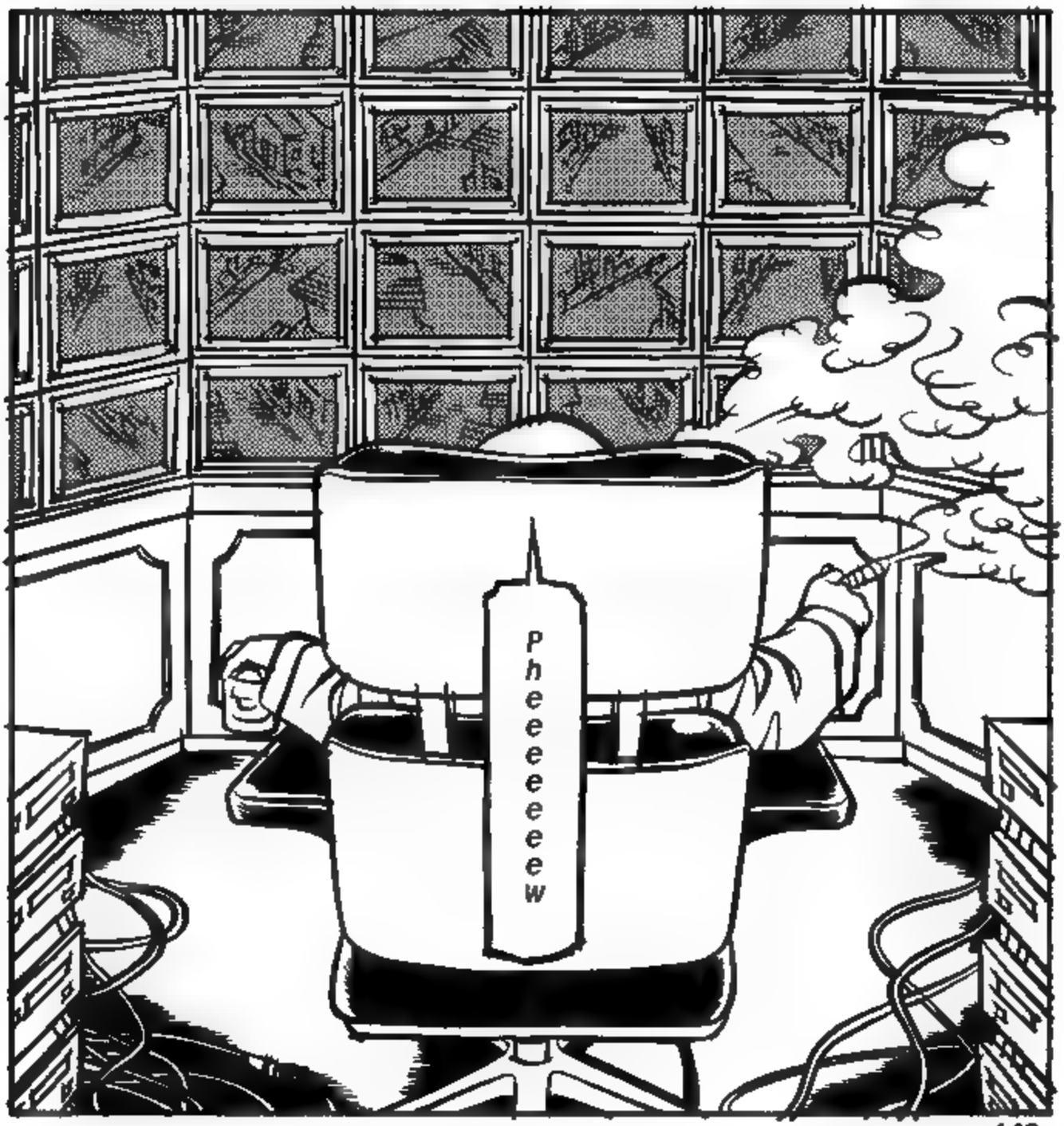
* Here: One of several sub-divisions of the local (prefectural) Criminal Investigation Department. The First Investigation Division (捜査一課 / Sōsa-ikka) primarily deals with serious crimes such as murder, robbery and abduction. The three detectives Yoko, Onoda and Tamura are most likely part of this division.


Is he in custody!?
You found a suspect for the transmis-sion tower's collapse?
Copy that! I'll send you some reinforce-ment ASAP!
Eat plenty.
Tastes good, huh?
A'ight, a'ight ...


CLICK
CLICK
CLICK
CLICK


KLAK




Pheeee

SOIL
Block 1-4 [End]

SOIL
Block 1-5 [Kinkaku-ji]

English version by NOMAD SOUL
QC by ERUTAN
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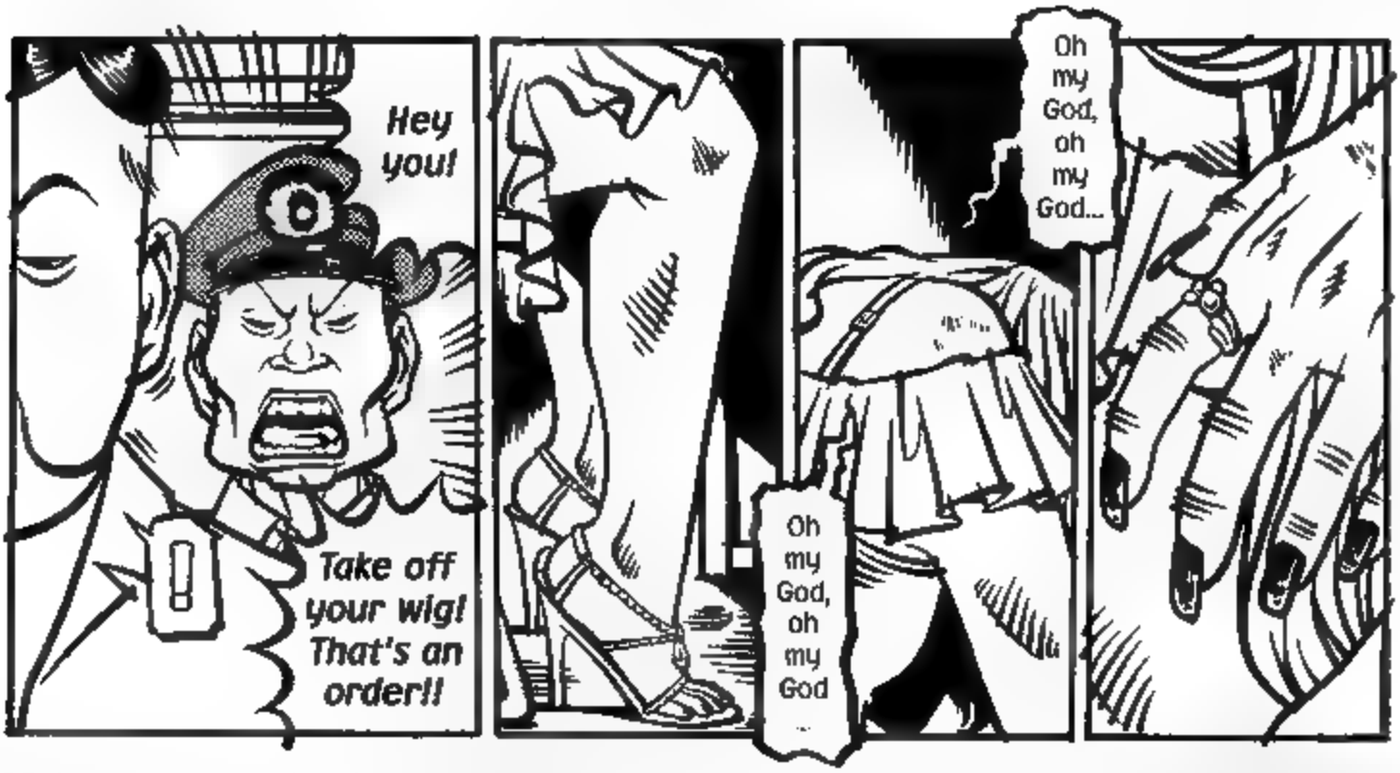
A tool of that type was reported as stolen from a construction site in the vicinity.
We found a special tool used for removing large-sized bolts on the car's back seat.
Yes. We suspect he didn't dare make a move out of fear that his car would come crashing down.
He didn't drink or eat anything for three days straight.
He was stuck in that tree since that night?
Sir, sir, this could be it, right?
...that'd mean that we're very close to solve the mystery around the Suzushiros' disappearance as well!
Supposing the suspect's primary objective was to cut off Soli's electricity supply...
No, sir. Not even a single drop of water...
You guys didn't feed him anything, did ya?

I have to warn you though. This suspect is an awkward customer.
I hope you're well prepared for a long grilling session
Jesus, even your smile makes me want to puke!
Oh my God, oh my God
Oh my God oh my God

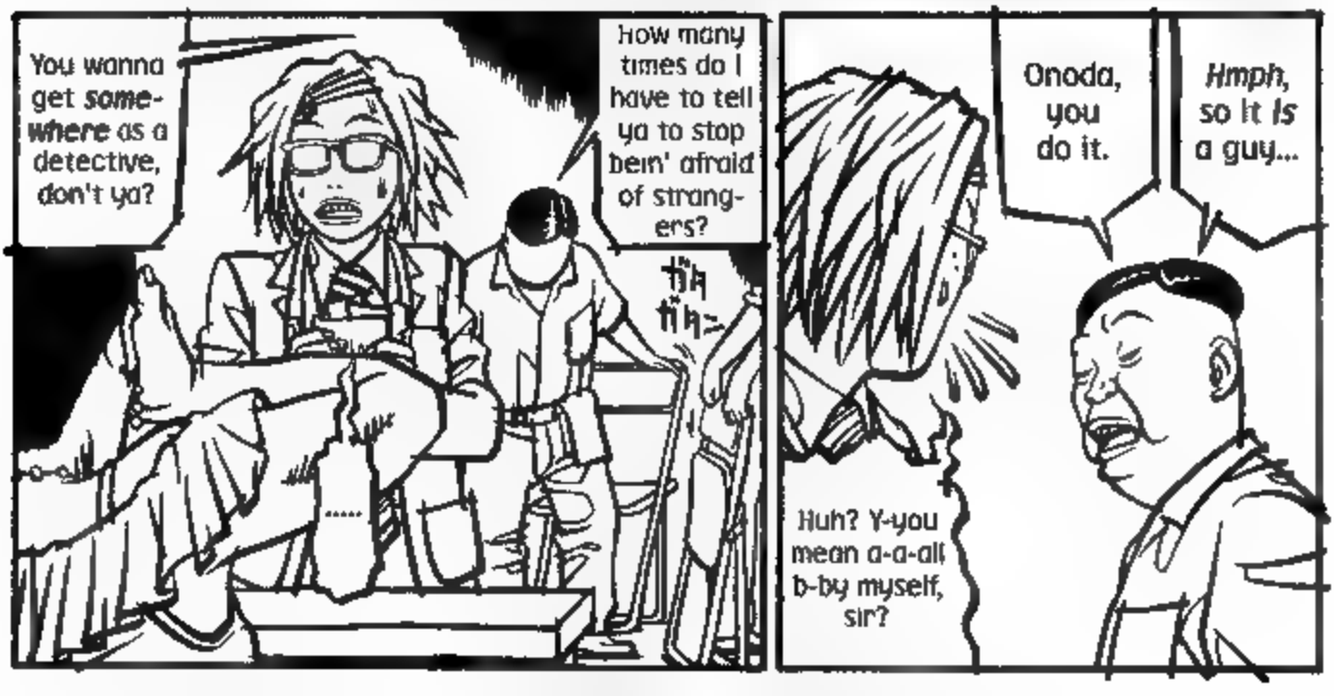
BLOCK 1-5

Oh my God, oh my God, oh my God...
Oh my God, oh my God, oh my God...


Hey you!
Take off your wig! That's an order!!
Oh my God, oh my God...
Oh my God, oh my God...

I meant y-you, you stinkin' piece of shit!
D-do as you're told, punk!!
Err ...

[Kinkaku-ji*]


You wanna get *somewhere* as a detective, don't ya?
How many times do I have to tell ya to stop bein' afraid of strangers?
.....
Onoda, you do it.
Hmph, so it *is* a guy...
Huh? Y-you mean a-a-all b-by myself, sir?

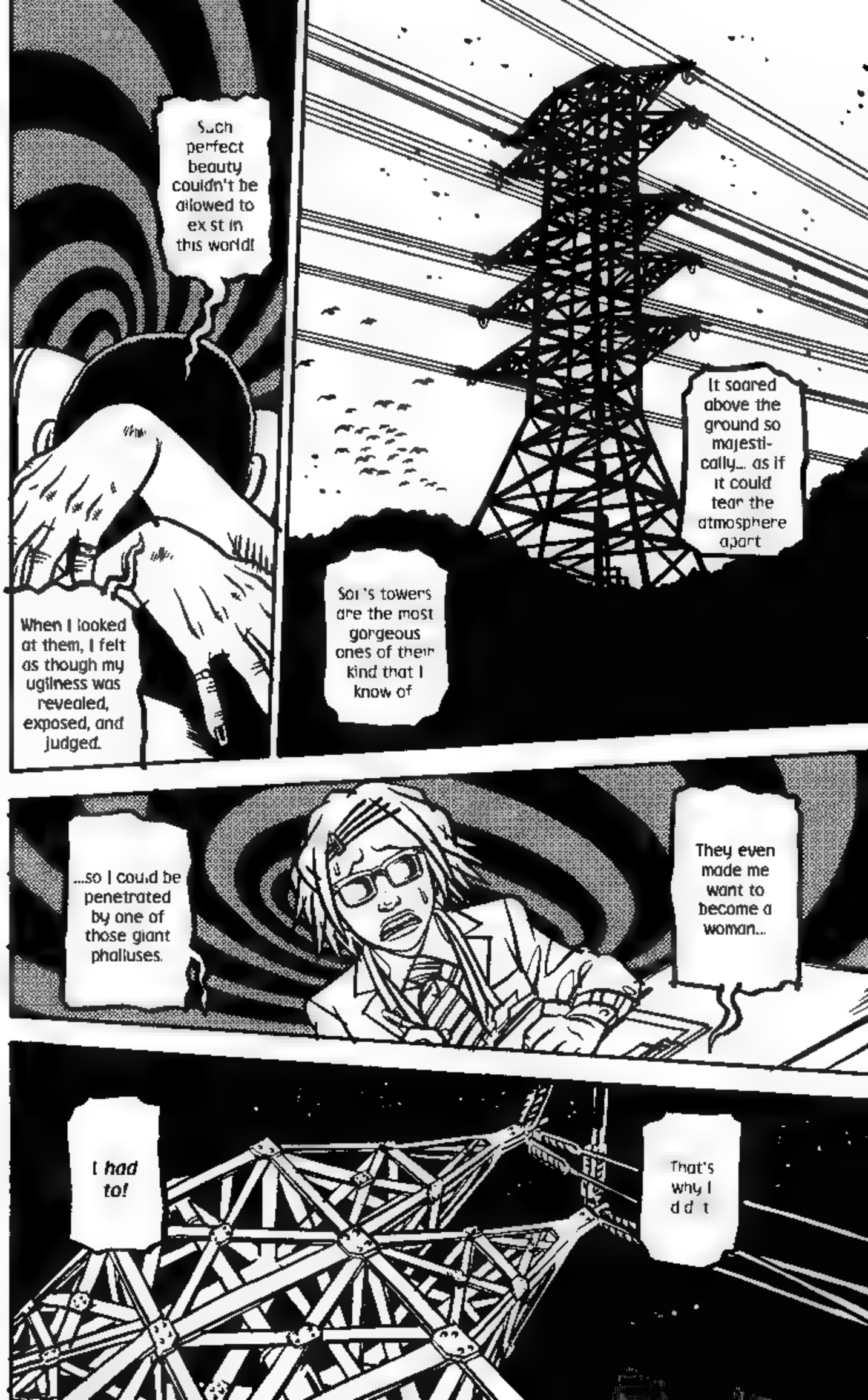
* Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion Temple) is the common nickname of the Rokuon-ji (Deer Garden Temple) temple in Kyôto, Japan. The building was originally built in 1397 to serve as a retirement villa for Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu. After his death, it was converted into a Zen temple of the Rinzai school.

O-okay, let me review the relevant events...
On the night of the crime, you used the special tool you stole from the construction site beforehand..
...to remove the bolts from the foundation of the transmission tower "Soil Line No 13"...
...thus, making it collapse.

* "Spicy gums" (karai gamu) are gums enhanced with an extra-strong flavor. Popular sorts include Lotte's caffeinated gum "Black Black" (of Wired Magazine fame) and Bourbon's "Strong Punch" with Guarana extracts.

W-what did you expect to achieve by doing that?
Is that correct?
HEE HEE
No one w
You won't understand it even if I tell you.
Oh my God! Oh my Good! Oh my Goood!
Yes, I did it!
That's why I did it!
HEE HEE

Oh my God! Oh my God!
You can eat when we're done with the interrogation.
I'm gonna *die* if I don't get something to eat!
This headache's killing me. I'm hypoglycemic!
That thing ...
...was *too* beautiful.
got some choco goodies too.
Oh, looks like they're melted.
Oh my God! Oh my God!
Oh my God! Oh my God!
What?

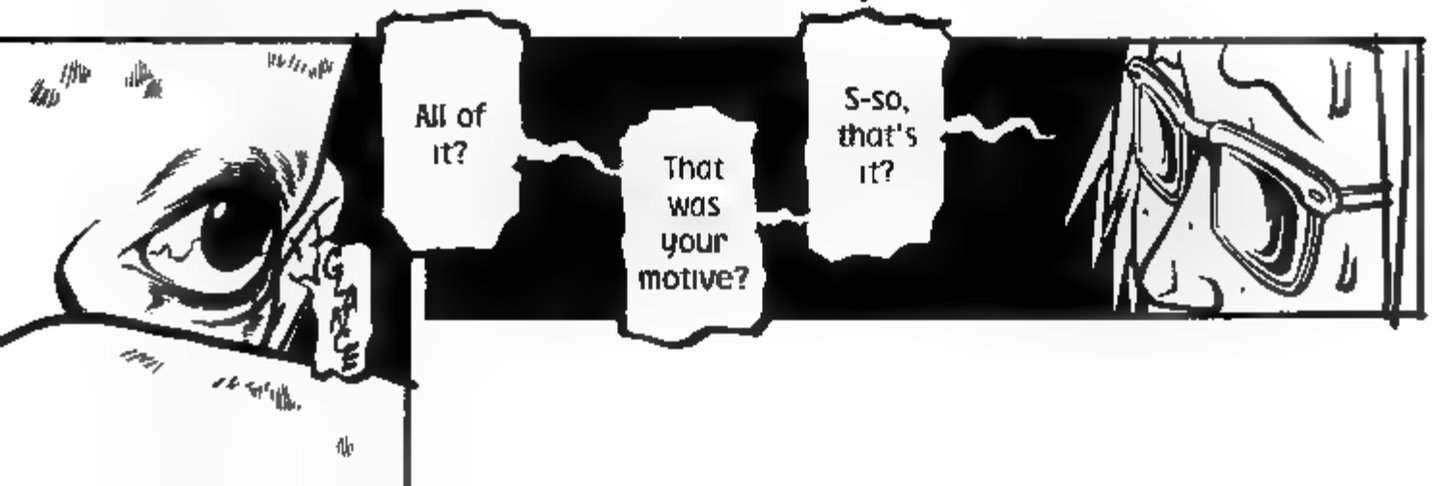

Such perfect beauty couldn't be allowed to exist in this world!
When I looked at them, I felt as though my ugliness was revealed, exposed, and judged.
Soi's towers are the most gorgeous ones of their kind that I know of
It soared above the ground so majestically... as if it could tear the atmosphere apart
...so I could be penetrated by one of those giant phalluses.
They even made me want to become a woman...
I *had to!*
That's why I did it

This... reminds me of "Kinkaku-ji."
It's about a young man who becomes jealous of the temple's beauty and eventually decides to burn it to the ground.
N-no sir, not "kinkakushi," I said "Kinkaku-*ji*"!
You mean the toilet? *
The novel by Yukio Mishima. **
...was simply indescribable.
That ecstasy ...
That's arson, all right.
...you will *never* be able to obtain a satisfactory explanation.
No matter how hard you people try to understand it...
As per Article 108 of the Penal Code, the penalty for that could be execution, life imprisonment, or a prison term of not less than five years.

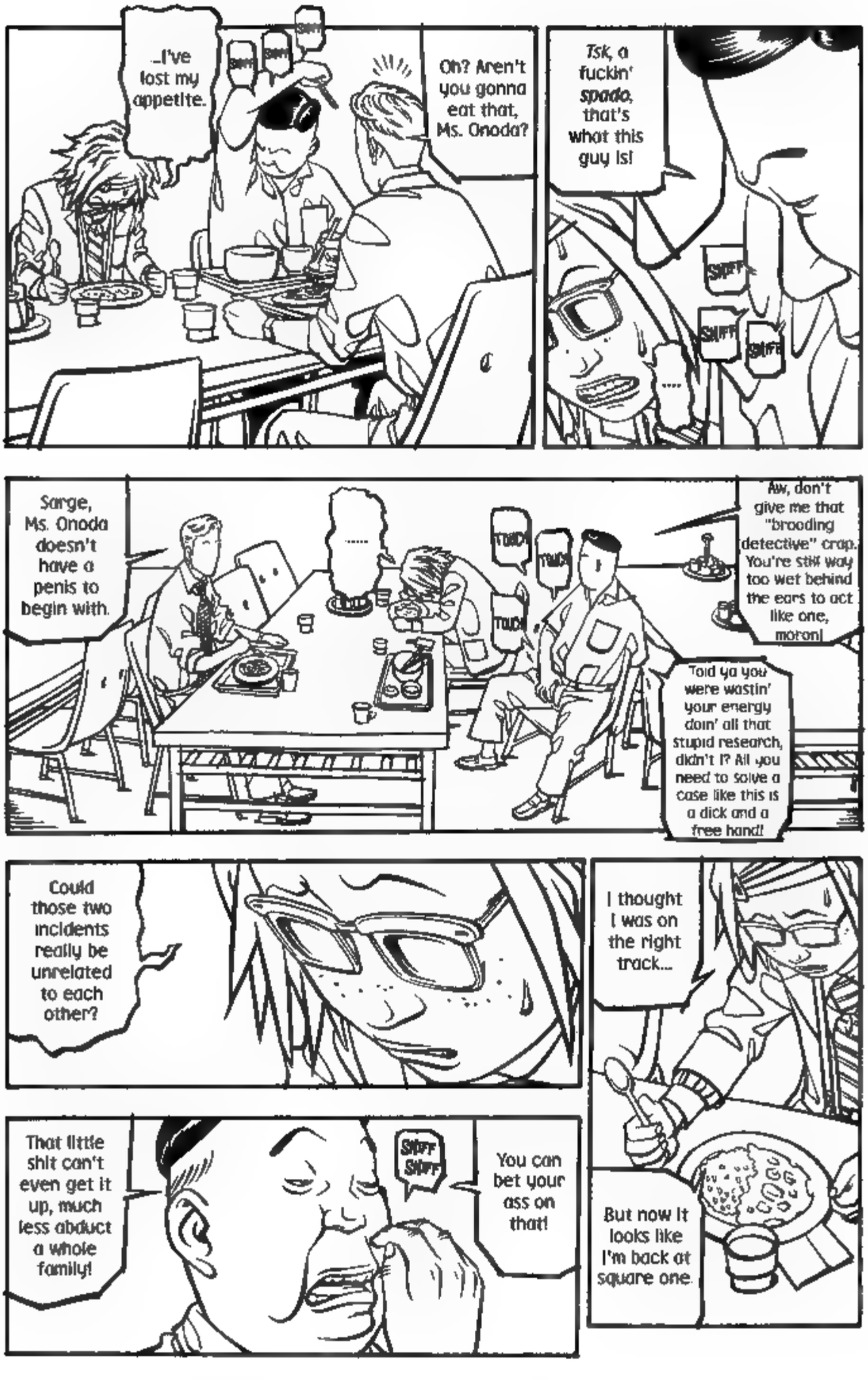
* Apparently, Yokoi misheard "Kinkaku-ji" as "kinkakushi," which denotes the hemispherical hood of a Japanese-style squat toilet.

** A well-known Japanese author whose real name was Kimitake Hiraoka. Mishima's rightist ideology and his ritual suicide (seppuku) made him one of the most controversial authors of post-war Japan. His novel *Kinkaku-ji* (The Temple of the Golden Pavilion; ISBN 0679752706) was based on an actual event of 1950. It depicts the burning of the famous temple by a young mentally disordered Buddhist monk, who is angered at his own physical ugliness.

...was never *meant* to be explicable.
Because that enigmatic feeling...

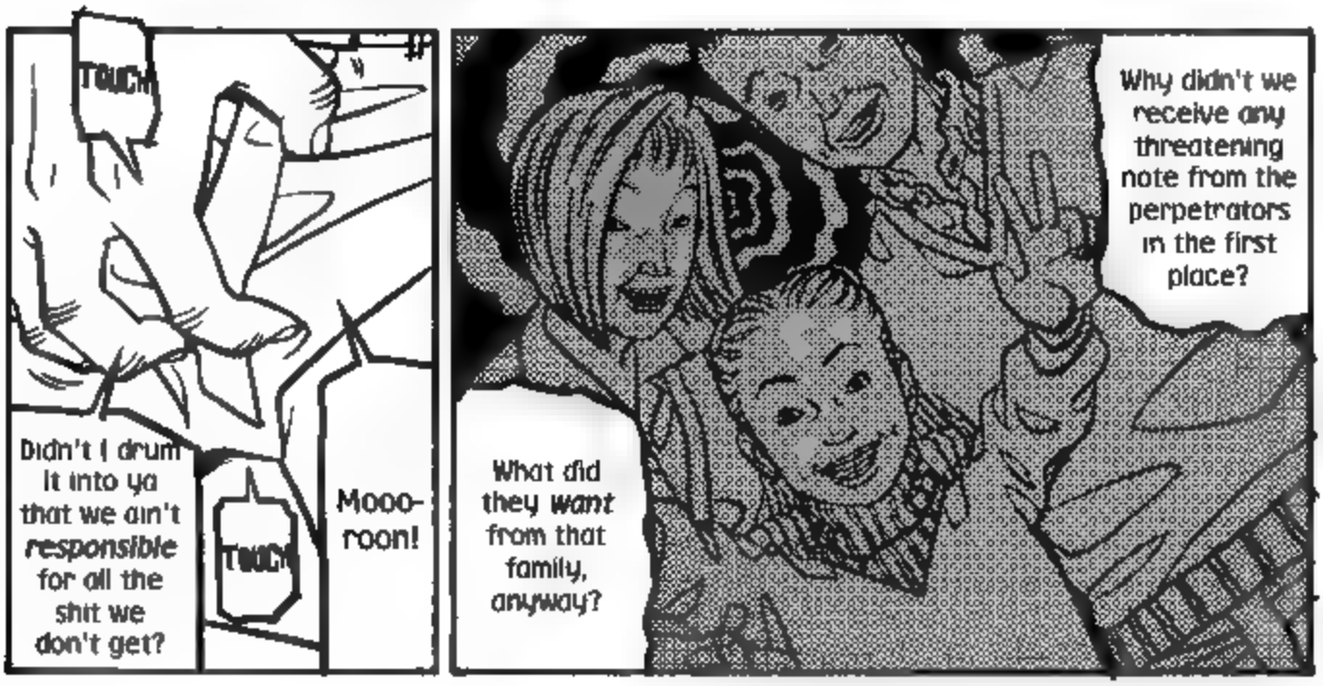

All of it?
That was your motive?
S-so, that's it?

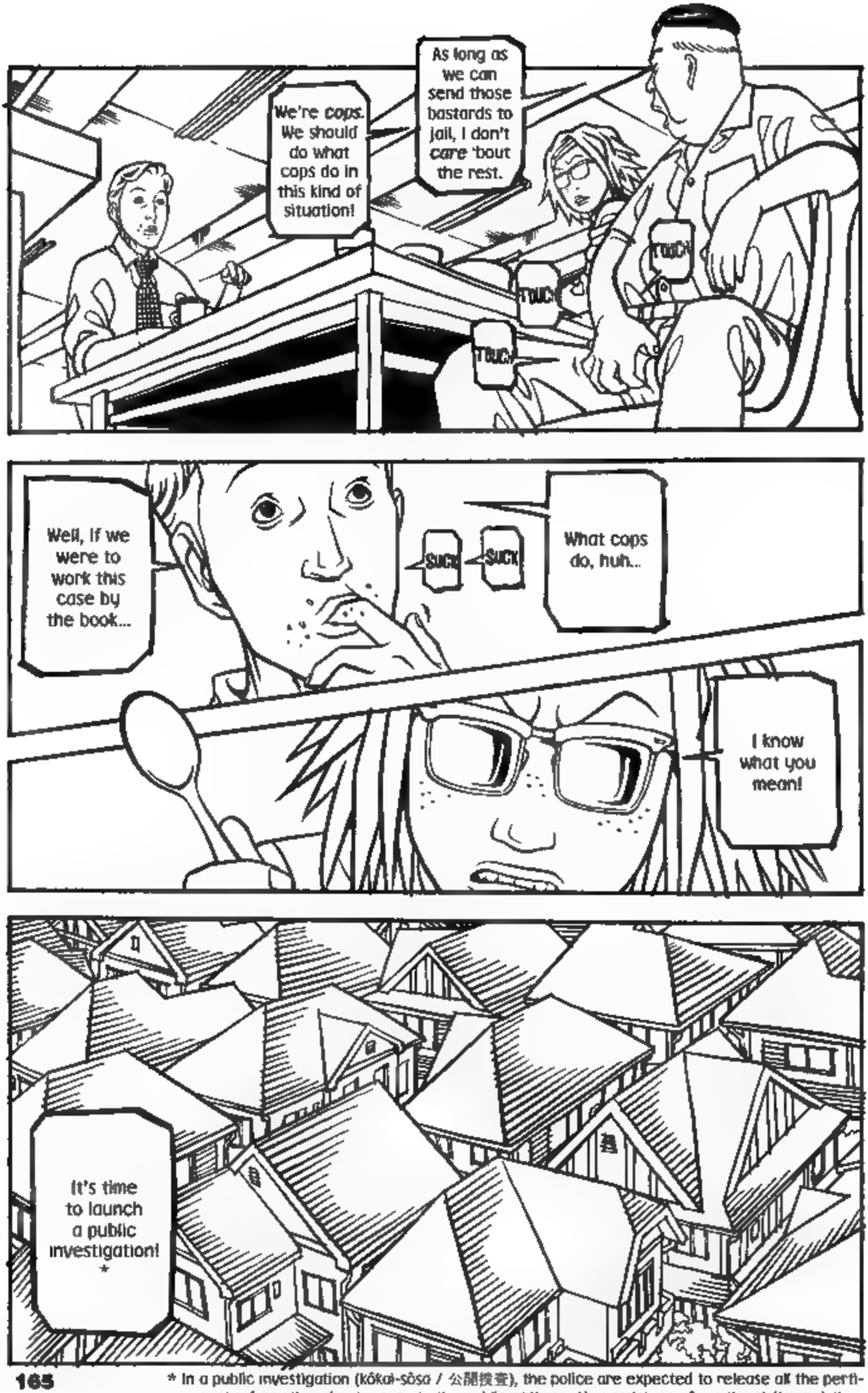
I dressed myself up as a woman and made a transmission tower collapse. What in the world could be more important than *that*!?
Do you mean to say there's something *else*!?
What!?
I see...
Our guy is an extreme case though.
Yeah, there are people who'd make a fetish of those steel towers that are exceptionally beautiful and impressive.
A "tower freak"?


...I've lost my appetite.
Oh? Aren't you gonna eat that, Ms. Onoda?
Tsk, a fuckin' *spada*, that's what this guy is!
SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF
....
Sarge, Ms. Onoda doesn't have a penis to begin with.
.....
TUCK
TUCK
TUCK
Aw, don't give me that "brooding detective" crap. You're still way too wet behind the ears to act like one, moron!
Told ya you were wastin' your energy doin' all that stupid research, didn't I? All you need to solve a case like this is a dick and a free hand!
Could those two incidents really be unrelated to each other?
I thought I was on the right track...
But now it looks like I'm back at square one.
That little shit can't even get it up, much less abduct a whole family!
SNIFF SNIFF
You can bet your ass on that!

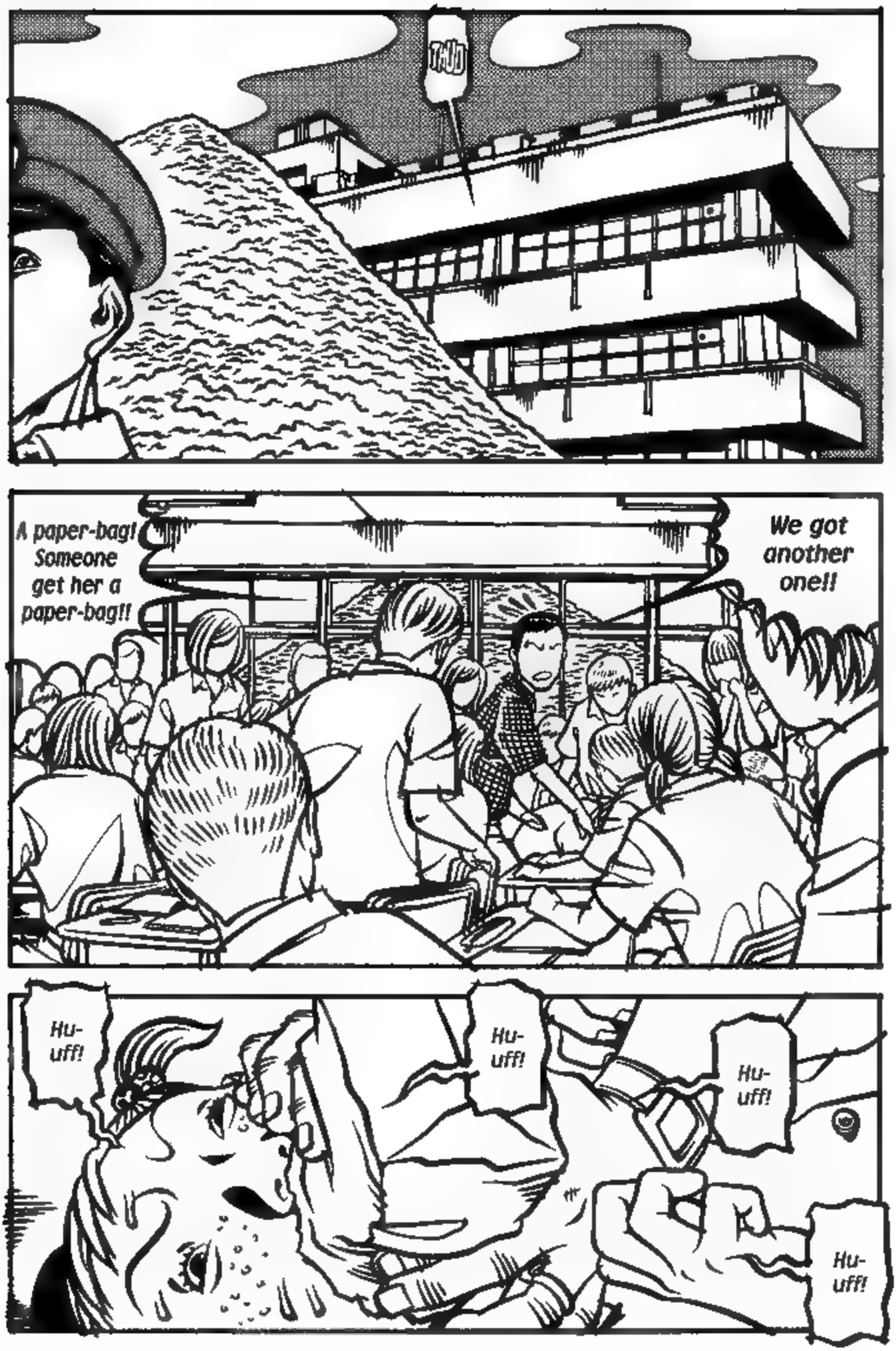
Great! I got both Madame Addlebrain and Mister Quitter as my partners.
No matter how you look at it, this case just doesn't make any sense.
Damn, maybe we'll have to file it as "unsolved."
STR
Right, so the power failure and the disappearance series only took place on the same night by chance.
On the other hand, the darkness might've provided the ideal opportunity for potential criminals to execute their plans...

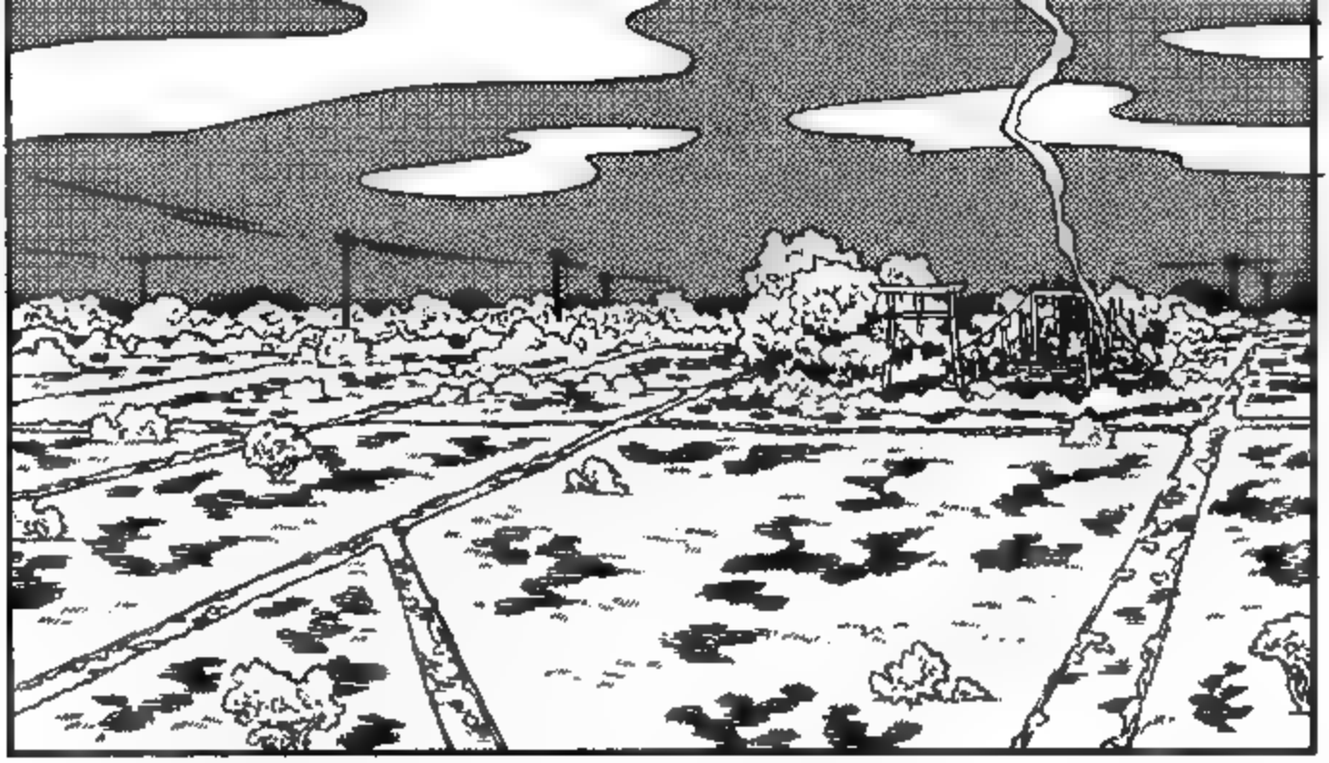
You're certainly right about this case being a puzzling one.
Starting with the "salt," what is its meaning?
Who was the "scaled man" really?


TOUCH
Didn't I drum it into ya that we ain't *responsible* for all the shit we don't get?
Mooo-roon!
Why didn't we receive any threatening note from the perpetrators in the first place?
What did they *want* from that family, anyway?


We're *cops*. We should do what cops do in this kind of situation!
As long as we can send those bastards to jail, I don't *care* 'bout the rest.
TUCK
TUCK
TUCK
Well, if we were to work this case by the book...
SUCK
SUCK
What cops do, huh...
I know what you mean!
It's time to launch a public investigation! *

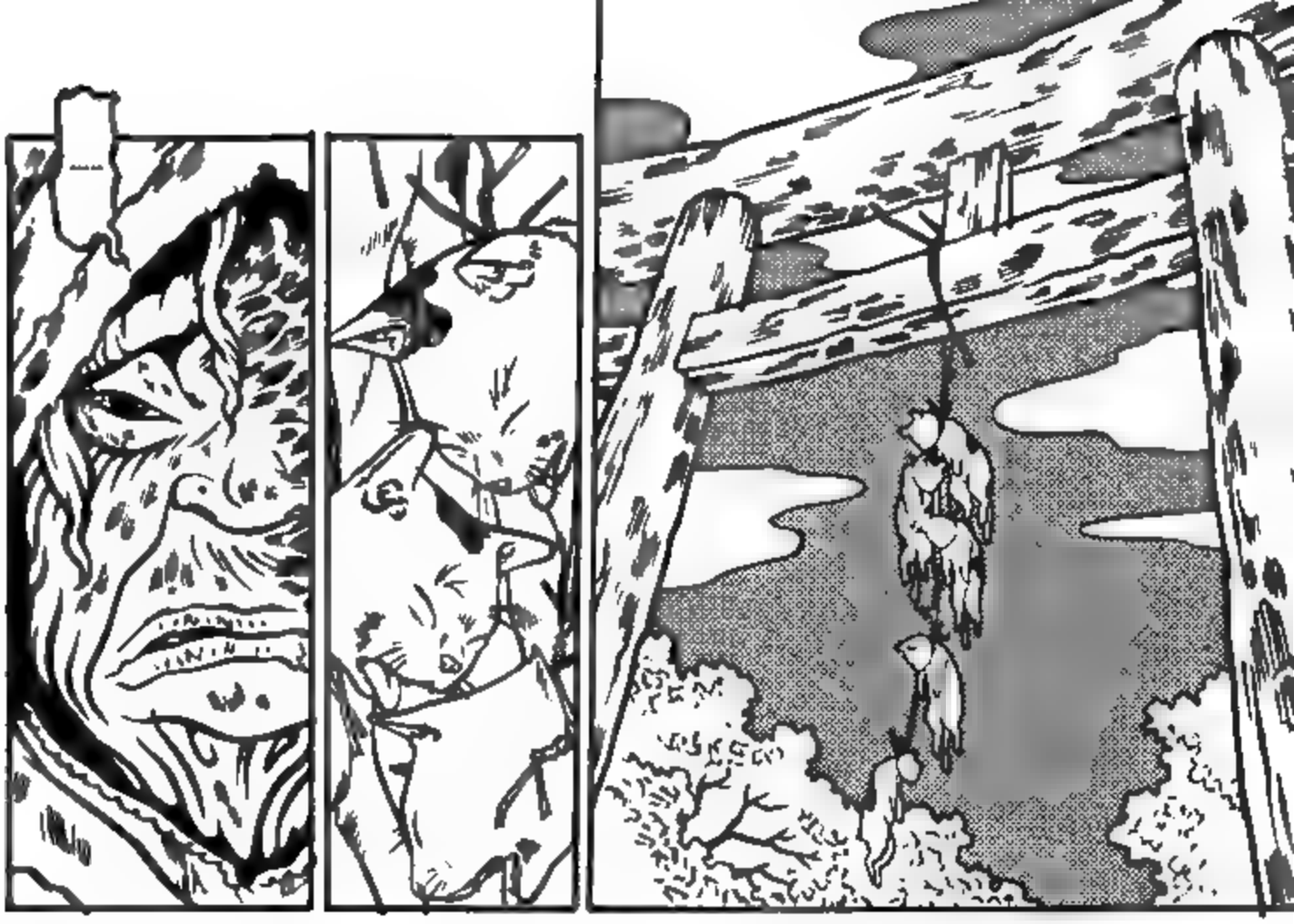
* In a public investigation (kôkai-sôsa / 公開捜査), the police are expected to release all the pertinent information about a case to the public while seeking assistance from the civil population.

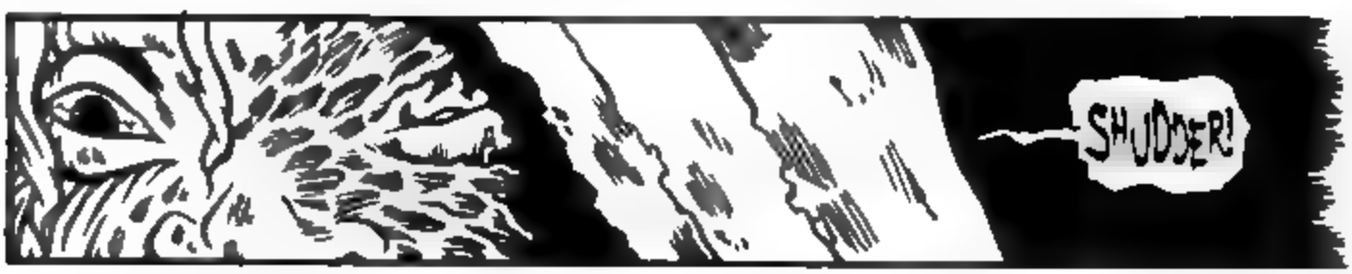

A paper-bag! Someone get her a paper-bag!!
We got another one!!
Hu-uff!
Hu-uff!
Hu-uff!
Hu-uff!

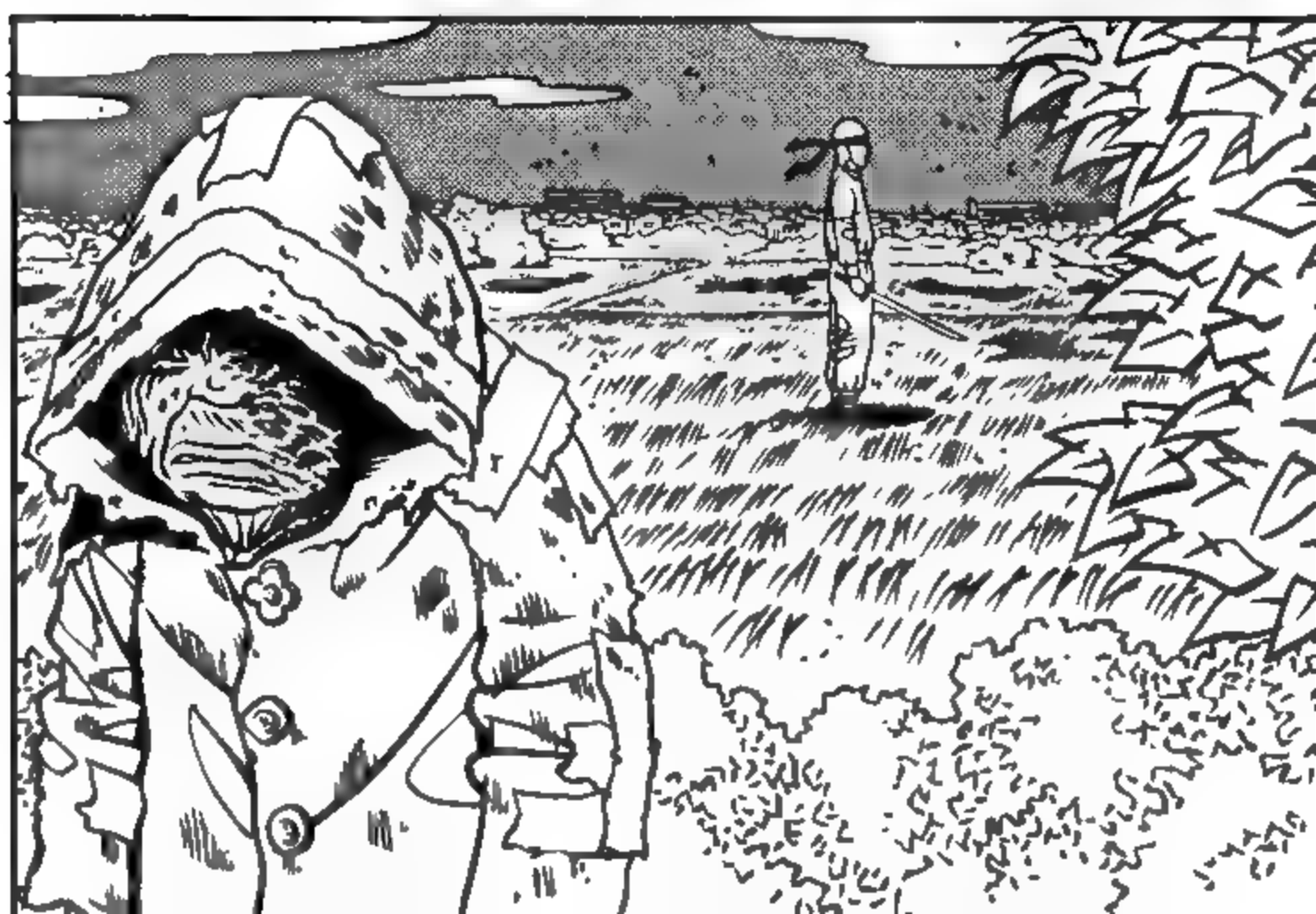


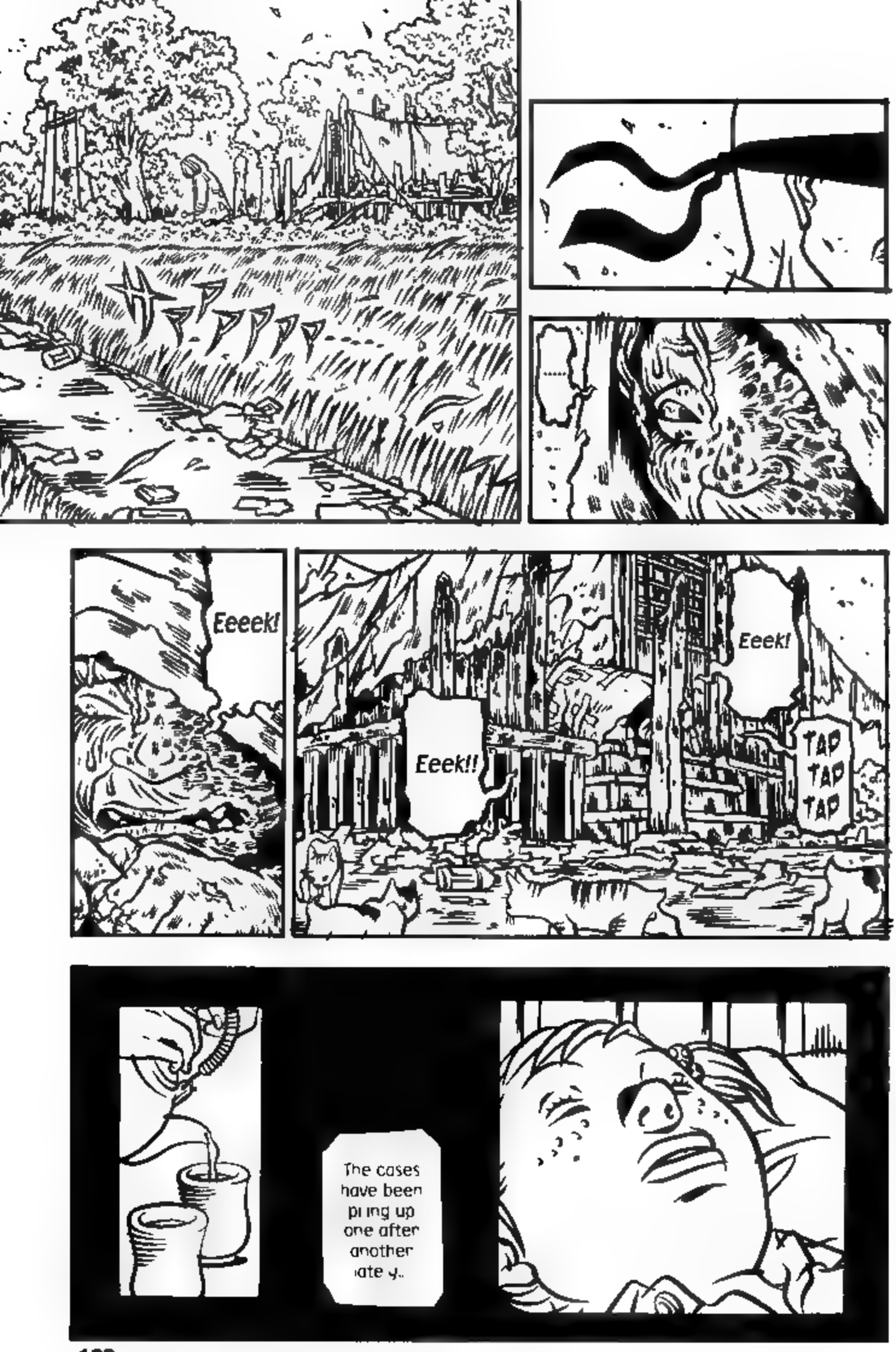
Good morning, everyone!
Good morning!

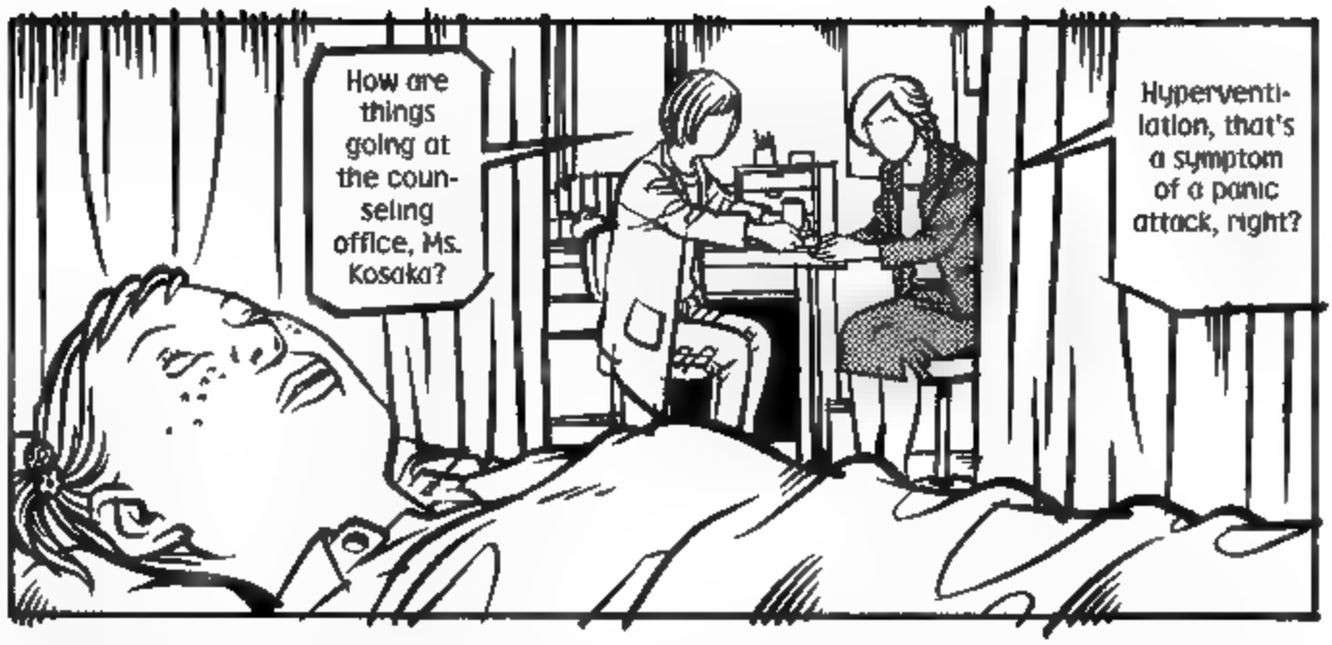
CRUNCH




SHUDDER!



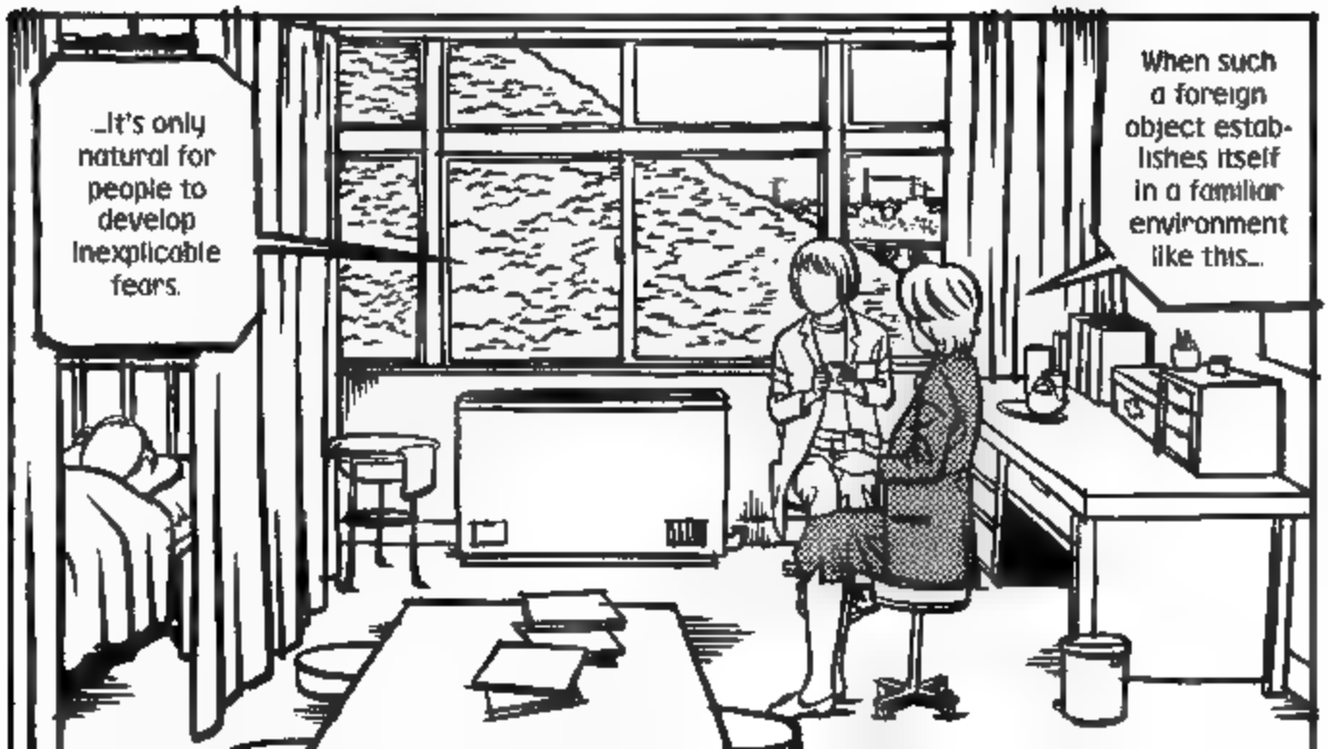

Eeeek!
Eeek!!
Eeek!
TAP
TAP
TAP
The cases have been piling up one after another late y..

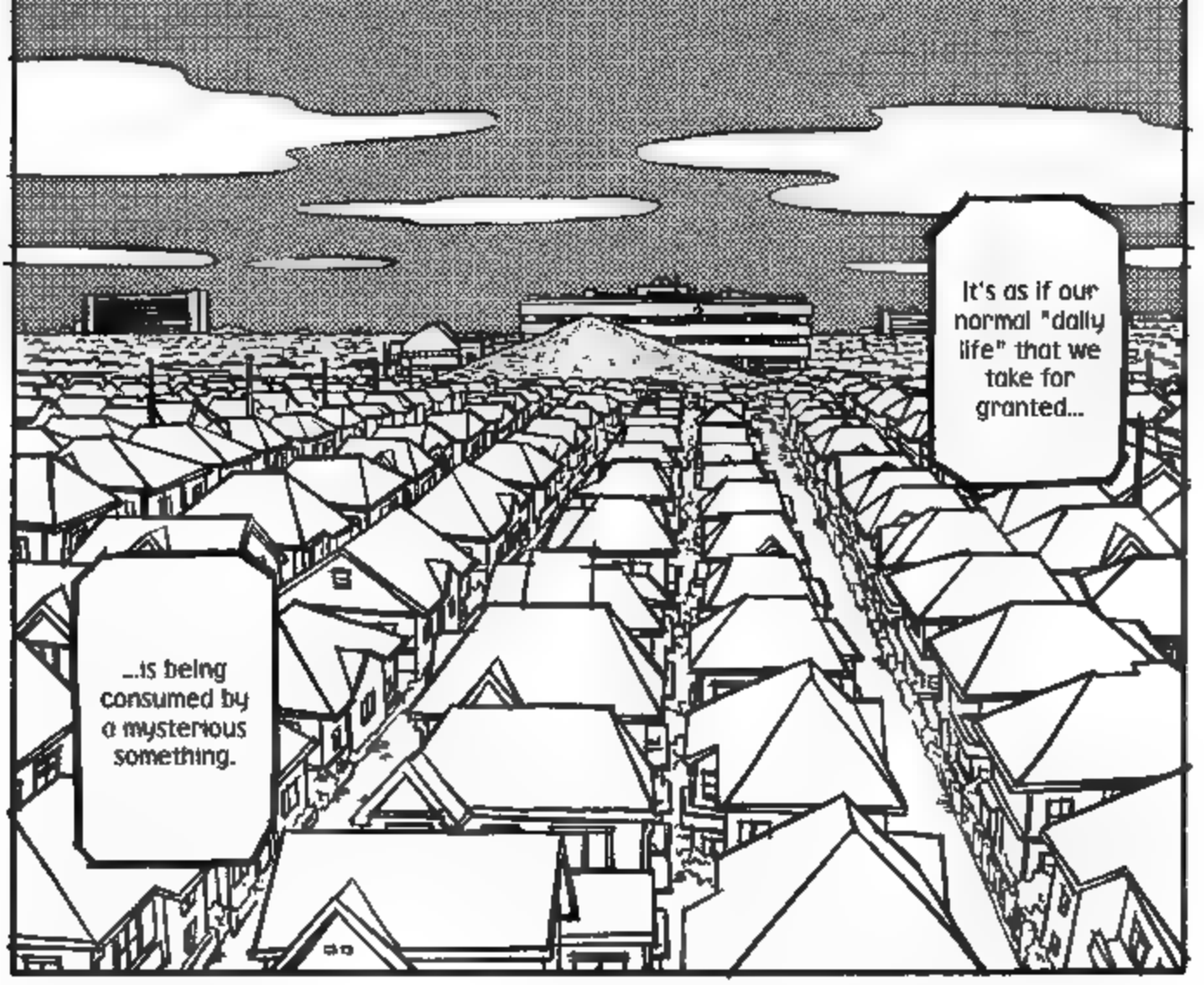

How are things going at the counseling office, Ms. Kosaka?
Hyperventilation, that's a symptom of a panic attack, right?

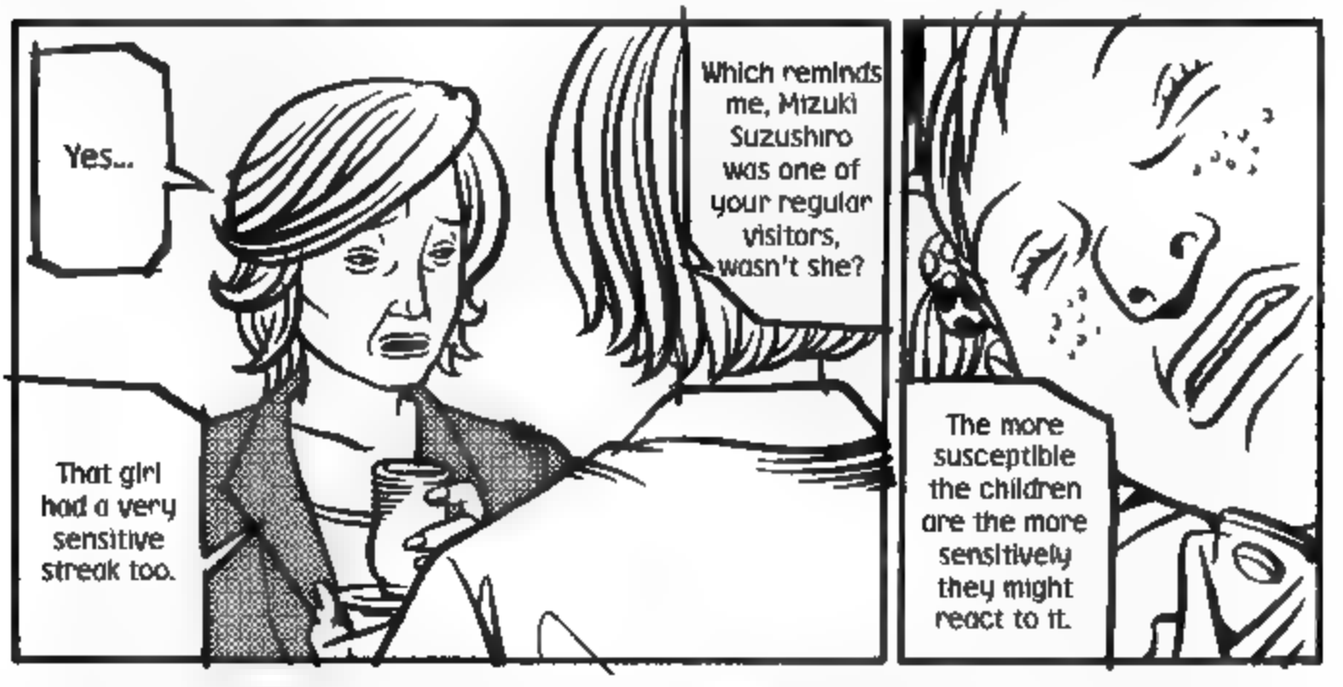
After all, one of this school's students and her entire family disappeared over night.
Well, that doesn't surprise me.

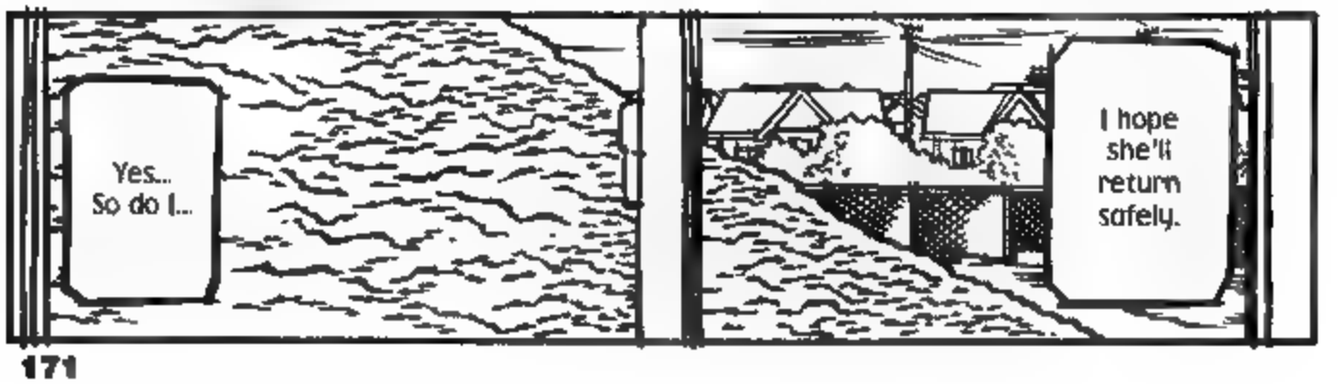
I haven't received a direct visit from a student yet, but I can *feel* it.
A kind of intangible anxiety is spreading through the entire school.

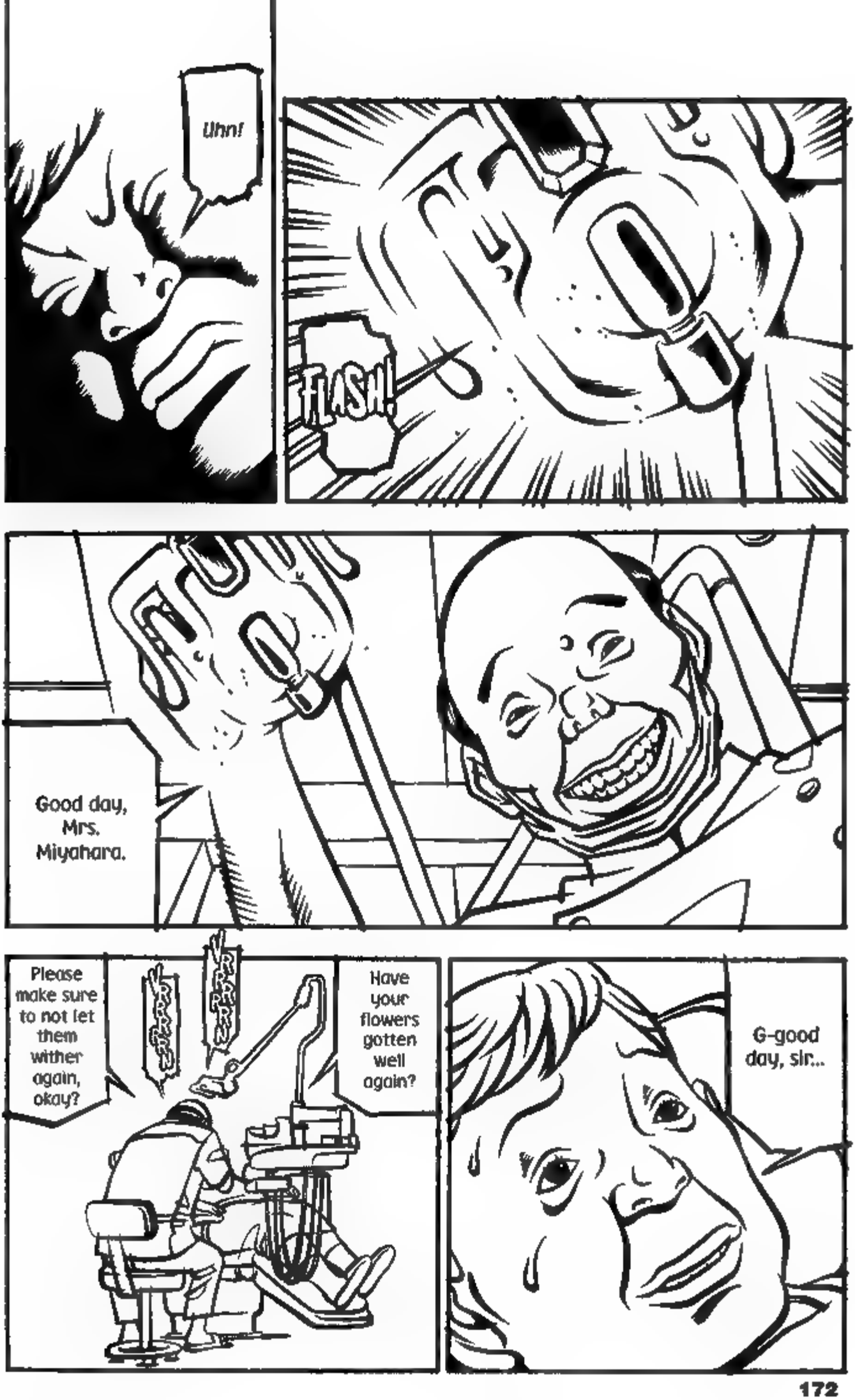
You're right.
And there's that "salt"...

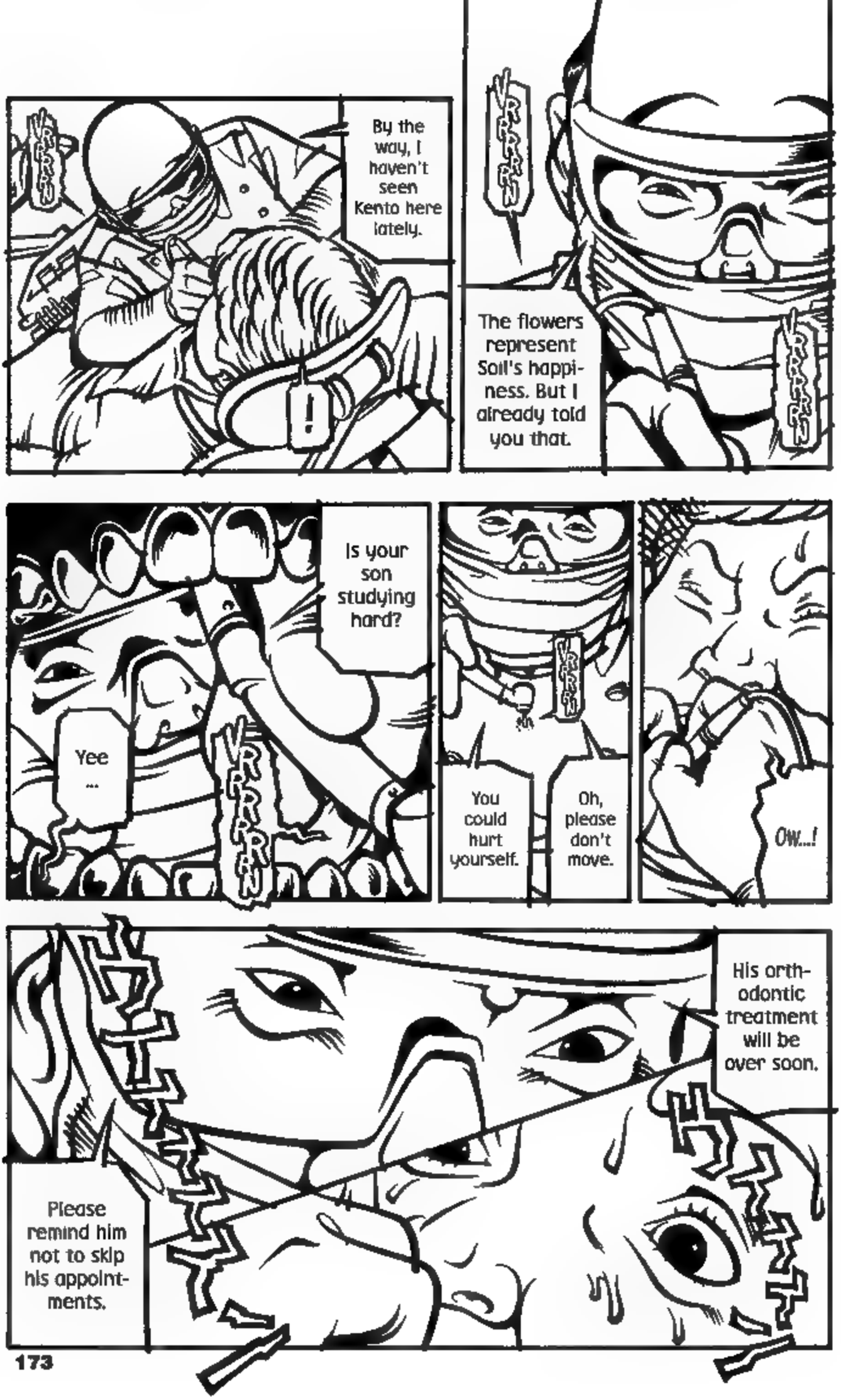

...It's only natural for people to develop inexplicable fears.
When such a foreign object establishes itself in a familiar environment like this...

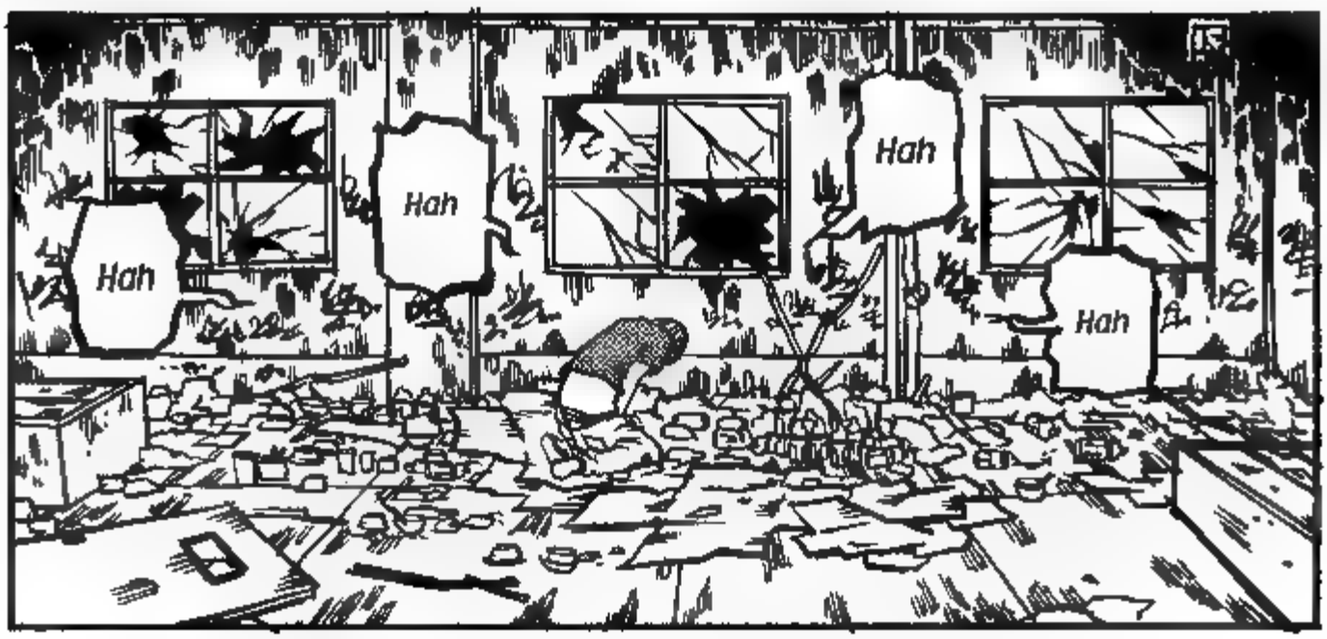

It's as if our normal "daily life" that we take for granted...
...is being consumed by a mysterious something.


Yes...
Which reminds me, Mizuki Suzushiro was one of your regular visitors, wasn't she?
That girl had a very sensitive streak too.
The more susceptible the children are the more sensitively they might react to it.


Yes... So do I...
I hope she'll return safely.

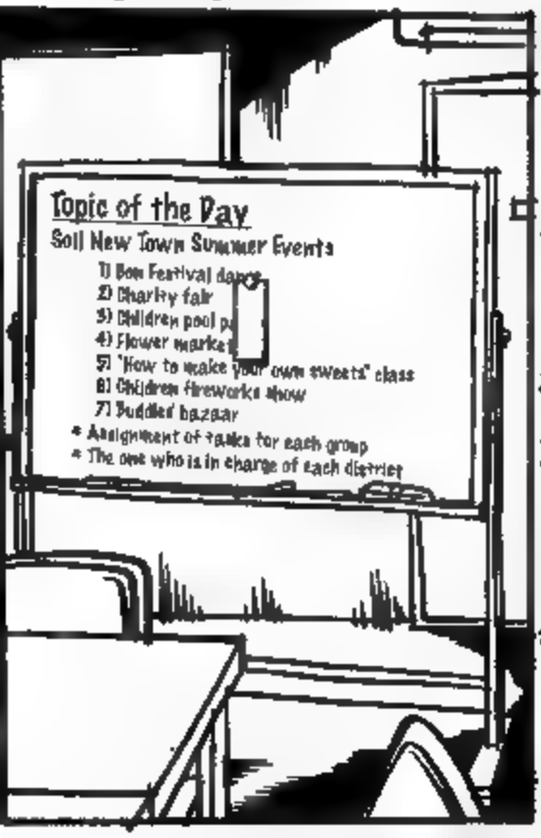

Uhn!
FLASH!
Good day, Mrs. Miyahara.
Please make sure to not let them wither again, okay?
Have your flowers gotten well again?
G-good day, sir...


By the way, I haven't seen Kento here lately.
!
VRRRRN
The flowers represent Soil's happiness. But I already told you that.
VRRRRN
Is your son studying hard?
Yee ...
VRRRRN
You could hurt yourself.
Oh, please don't move.
VRRRRN
OW...!
His orthodontic treatment will be over soon.
Please remind him not to skip his appointments.


Hah
Hah
Hah
Hah

Hah
Hah
Hah

* [Soil New] Town Council-House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* Assignment of tasks for each group
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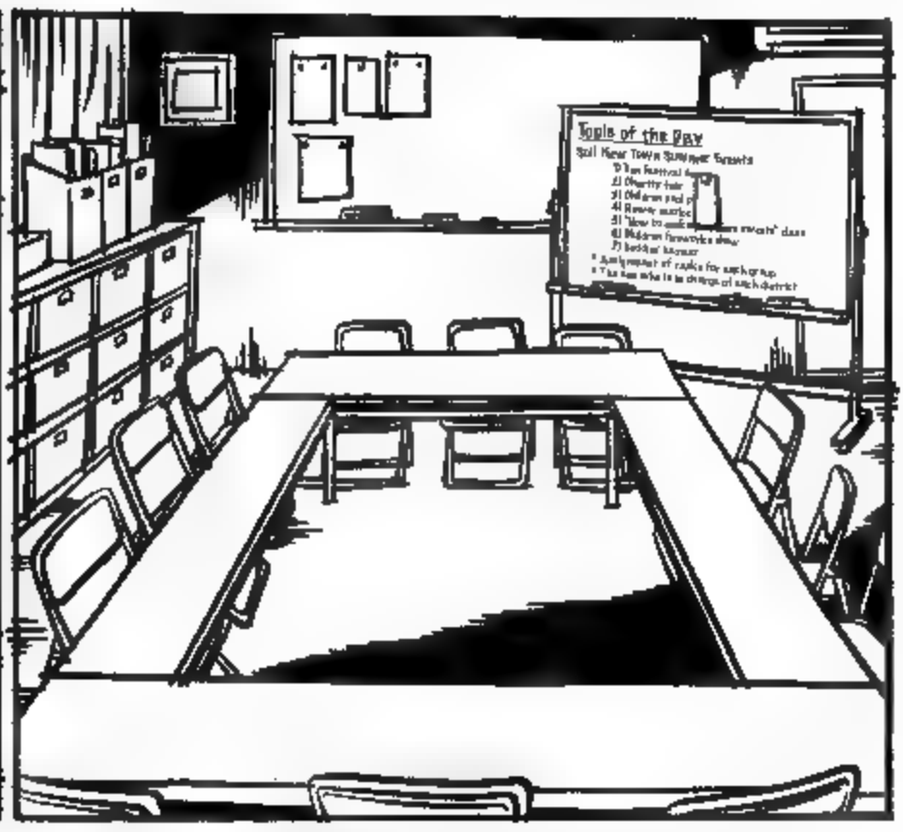
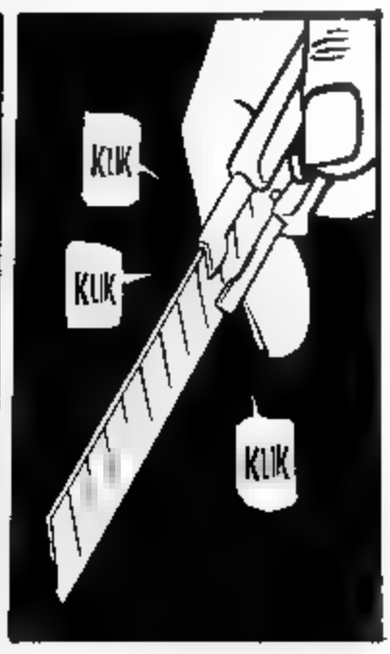
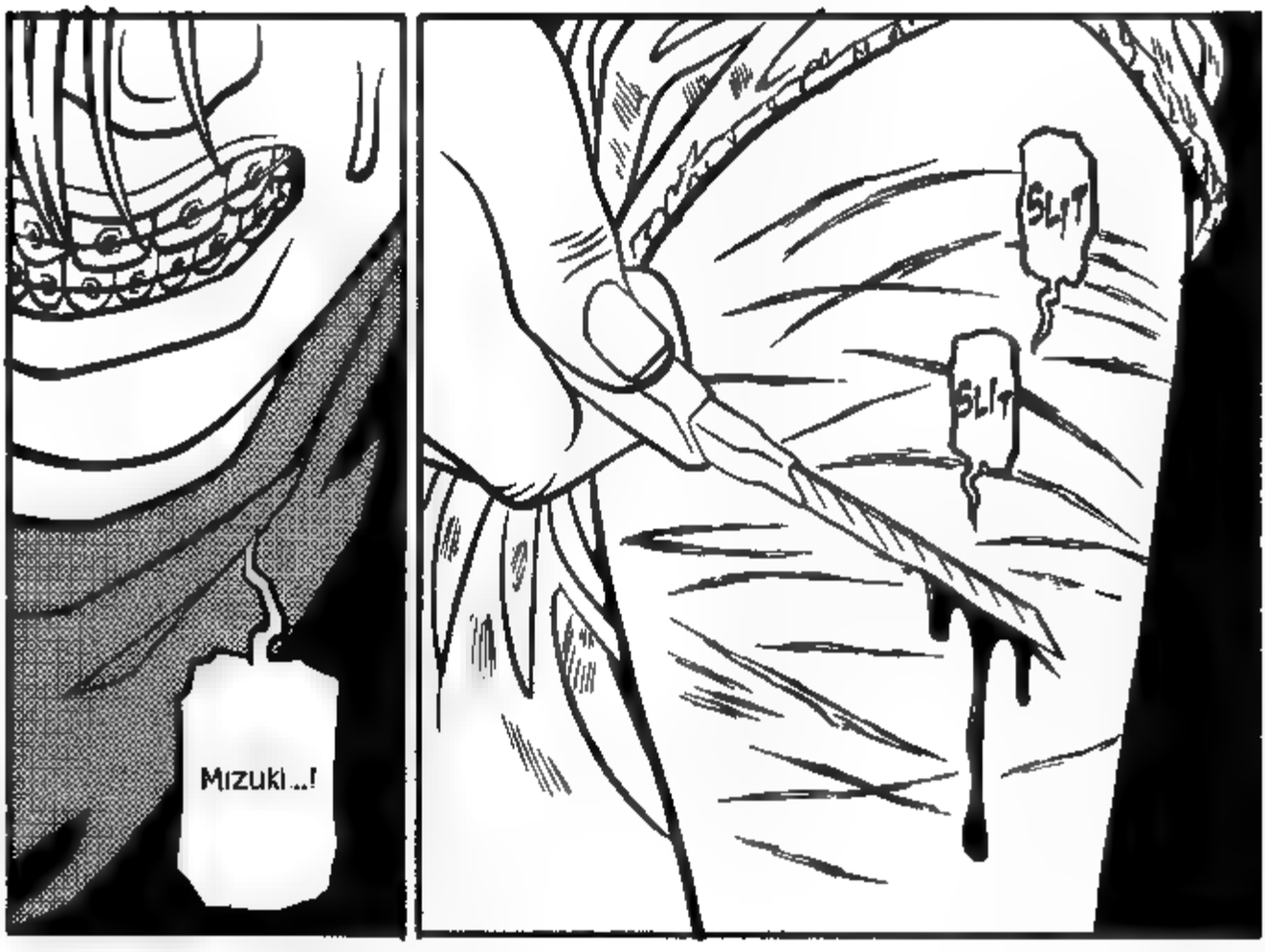
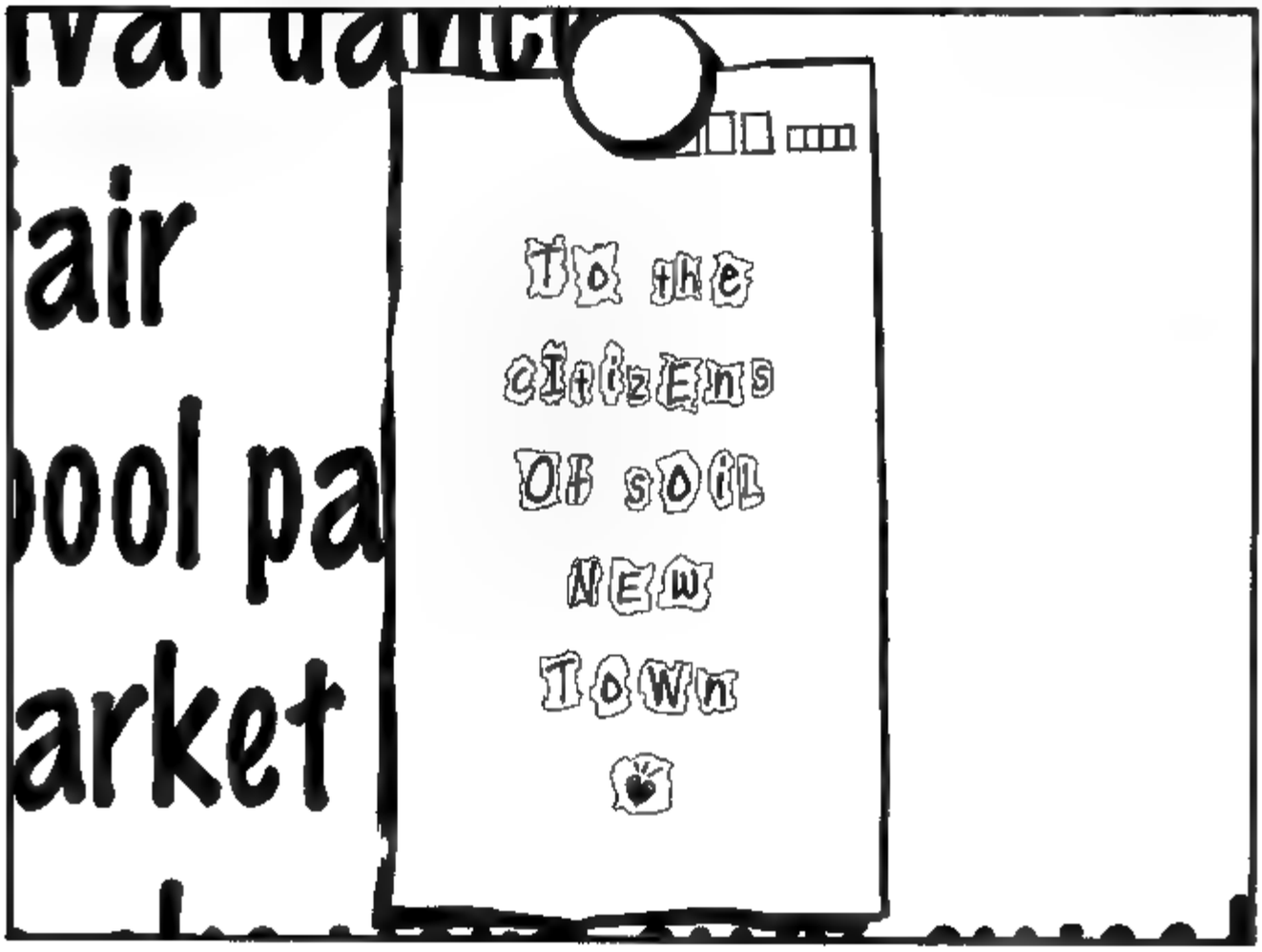





Mizuki...!
SLIT
SLIT


air
ool pa
arket
To the
citizens
of soil
new
town

SOIL
Block 1-5 [End]

SOIL
Block 1-6 [Kento]

English version by NOMAD SOUL
QC by ERUTAN
kotonoha.monkey-pirate.com

What the hell is your problem, Onoda?

Or did your twisted mind just come to the conclusion that I needed some friggin' physical exercises?

Do you have a thing for me, is that it?

* Soil New Town

Mr. Yokoi, Ms. Onoda, where have you been? You're *late!*

Sir, it was ***engine trouble*** that stopped the train. I ***object*** to being made responsible for that incident!

Ask *her!* Goddamn broad made me walk all the way here from the last station.

BLOCK 1-6

W-why is that?

What!?

We oughtn't to waste a single minute to launch the public investigation!!

But the fate of both the Suzushiros and Officer Ichinose is still unaccounted for!

Dunno... I'm not the one you should ask...

But the assistant inspector said it's still too early for that...

You should've at least tried to convince him!!

And my question is *why!?*

Anyway, he did order that we keep this case's investigation as confidential as possible...

B-but sir, I don't understand this decision *at all!*

Who gives *a fuck?* Let's just do our job.

The Big Dog has spoken. There's no way round it.

Let's roll, Onoda.

GRAH

What-ever...

Whaaat !?

Tch ...

What a pain in the ass!

[Kento]

Hey, hey, haven't I told you to go back to your class-rooms!?

All right! Time for the Paranormal Phenomena Research Club to spring into action!

Aw, c'mon. Ya expect me to do that stupid pose, *too?*

SMAK

Say what!? You mean the tecs are here, Tomiyama!?

Ya heard that, Seki? The wiggle and the hag are said to be in the counseling office.

Yes, Mizuki did come see me often.

Well, I had the impression she didn't want to go into details...

...so I didn't dare to pressure her.

Um, d-did something trouble her?

She ain't no spring chicken anymore, but she's still a hot little number if you ask me.

I bet she's got one or two sob stories to tell herself.

Nevertheless, listening to those stories is still an important aspect of a school counselor's job.

Generally, our conversations only revolved around silly gossip of little consequence.

Concerning Mizuki...

However...

"There are moments when I don't know who I am."

There were times when she said things like "Am I really me?" and...

I-is it true that she occasionally fell asleep from one moment to another?

I wonder if she was experiencing what we call "self-identity confusion."

It's a phenomenon often observed in a developing adolescent ego though.

Oh yes, that had her troubled too.

Naked pussy? Where?

...I suspect the poor girl was suffering from narcolepsy. *

This is just my personal conjecture, but...

* A chronic neurological disorder characterized by a fleeting urge to sleep. If the urge becomes overwhelming, individuals will fall asleep for periods lasting from a few seconds to several minutes.

Mizuki was always acting cheerfully...

...but in retrospect I have to wonder if she wasn't harboring a deep anguish within her soul.

It's a medical condition that makes the patient go to sleep suddenly and unexpectedly.

Nobody knows exactly what causes those attacks. However, I did hear about cases in which extreme stress was found to be the triggering factor

O-one last thing...

Yes?

Hey! What are you two doing over there!?

Did they just say "Nuked Pepsi"?

...I noticed that one student has been absent ever since the night of the power failure.

When I surveyed the school's attendance record earlier...

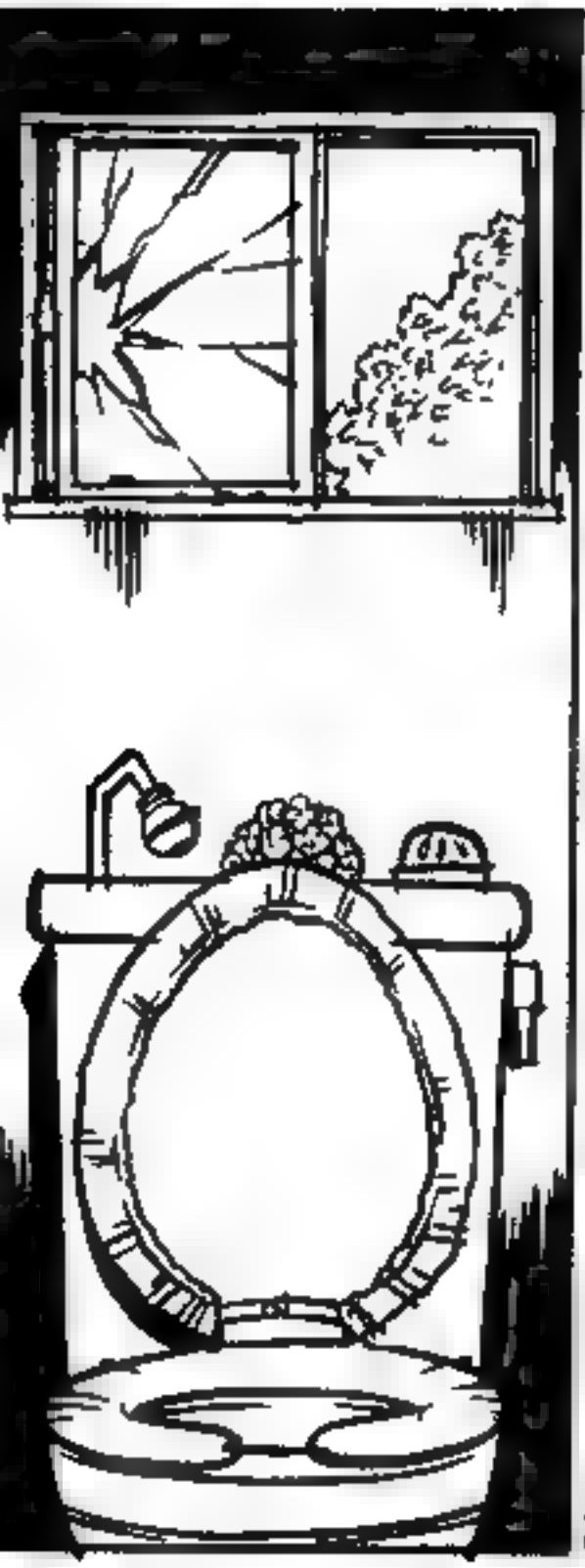
The scaled Man
The salt piles
The Steel Towers
The Flowers
Steel towers
Female clothing
A queen? (Wot!)
Kinkaku-ji
His name is Kento Miyahara.
☆ Class 2-A
Kento Miyahara
Absent since the following day
☆ Class 3-E
Tadashi
Let me see ...

Are you deaf or what!? Get the hell outta here!!
That gloomy guy?
Miya-hara?

He, too, was a regular visitor of mine...
Oh, Kento ...

Although he gave the exact opposite impression as Mizuki...
...I think those two must have had *something* in common.
He was a rather shy boy, introverted even.

They got along well the times they came across each other in this office.



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* Assignment of tasks for each group
* The one who is in charge of each district

Idaho

Um, I must tell you some-thing...

To the citizens of soil new town

Soil, our home town is a beautiful place to live.

flowing is everyone is kind to each other. The whole town is one big family. That's why I must save the suzushiros. The parents, the daughter, their lives are in our hands.

My son's in the same grade as Mizuki...

...so I had the chance to read her composition that was included in the students' essay anthology issued this spring...

This...

This is definitely her hand...

COLLECT 30 MILLION YEN FROM ALL THE TOWN'S CITIZENS. IF YOU FAIL TO RAISE THE MONEY THE FAMILY

KILLED. YOU ALL WOULD BE MURDERERS.

FURTHER MESSAGE WILL FOLLOW

KILLED. YOU INFORM THE POLICE THE FAMILY WILL BE KILLED. THEN YOU ALL WOULD BE MURDERERS.

What... *is* this thing?

Then this must be... Mizuki's too?

Gross!

Oh my God!

Could it be a... finger-nail?

Oho!

Is there something you don't want other people to know?

The police ?

But...

We ought to report this to the police immediately!

As far as I am concerned, that is.

Not really --

Someone must have held a grudge against the Suzushiros, after all...

Are we dealing with a kidnapping?

A ransom letter... How terrible!

Don't act naive! You *know* why!

A grudge? But why?

Isn't it obvious?

It's because of that "business."

Me too!

Right.

I've invested *so much* in it!

But I, I...

Good question!

What are we supposed to do with all those goods now?

This can only mean that someone from this town did it!

You can say that again!

This is all the Suzu-shiros' fault!

It says "*our* home town," right?

Just take a look at the letter...

You think?

It can't be!?

You mustn't be so easily swayed!!

Someone who came from the outside!

This must be the doing of a "stranger"!

Nobody in "Soil" would stoop this low!

W-we can't let this foul provocation take us in...

...and begin to suspect each other!

Have you all forgotten that "Soil" is our perfect town?

Are we?

We are no cold-hearted people who would leave a whole family die without trying to help them, are we?

For now, saving the Suzushiros should take precedence over identifying the kidnapper!

It will be better that way.

I agree...

Yes, we should save them...

Absolutely.

It'd be awful to leave them to their fate!

No, of course not!

What should we do about the police?

But...

Right.

As a citizen of "Soil," it goes without saying that I will help out!

So will I!

O-of course I will contribute my part.

If we split the 30 million evenly between everyone...

I didn't mean to lose my head like that.

P- please forgive me.

Those filthy strangers are just going to devastate our town even more. I can't take that!

We can't depend on the police!

Don't let the police notice this by any chance!

Please apprise the citizens of your districts of the situation and start collecting the money.

Very well, ladies...

How can I help you?

Oh, detectives.

Um, Mrs. Miyahara ...?

M-my apologies that we have to bother you again!

Um, today we would like to speak with Kento, your son.

Then call him up. Where's the problem?

Well...

Oh...

Kento is currently with one of our relatives in Nagano...

I-I'm afraid that's not possible...

He's out camping over there, so...

Well, you see...

RRRING

RRRING

RRRING

SLAM

RRING

RRING

CRRK...

I-if that's all, would you please excuse me?

RRING

RRING

Of course, ma'am. Once you have heard from him, please let us know...

Hello ...?

Hello?

Miya-hara resi-dence.

Kento, is that you?

Please say some-thing!

K-Kento?

Kento!!

What have you been doing?

Where are you at?

Why don't you come home!?

BEEP

RATTLE

CLINK

!!

I'm so sorry!!

I'll have the money by tomorrow! I swear!!

Sorry! Sorry! Sorry!!

I'm really sorry! Please spare me!!

All I wanted was to see blood, man.

Forget 'bout the moolah for today.

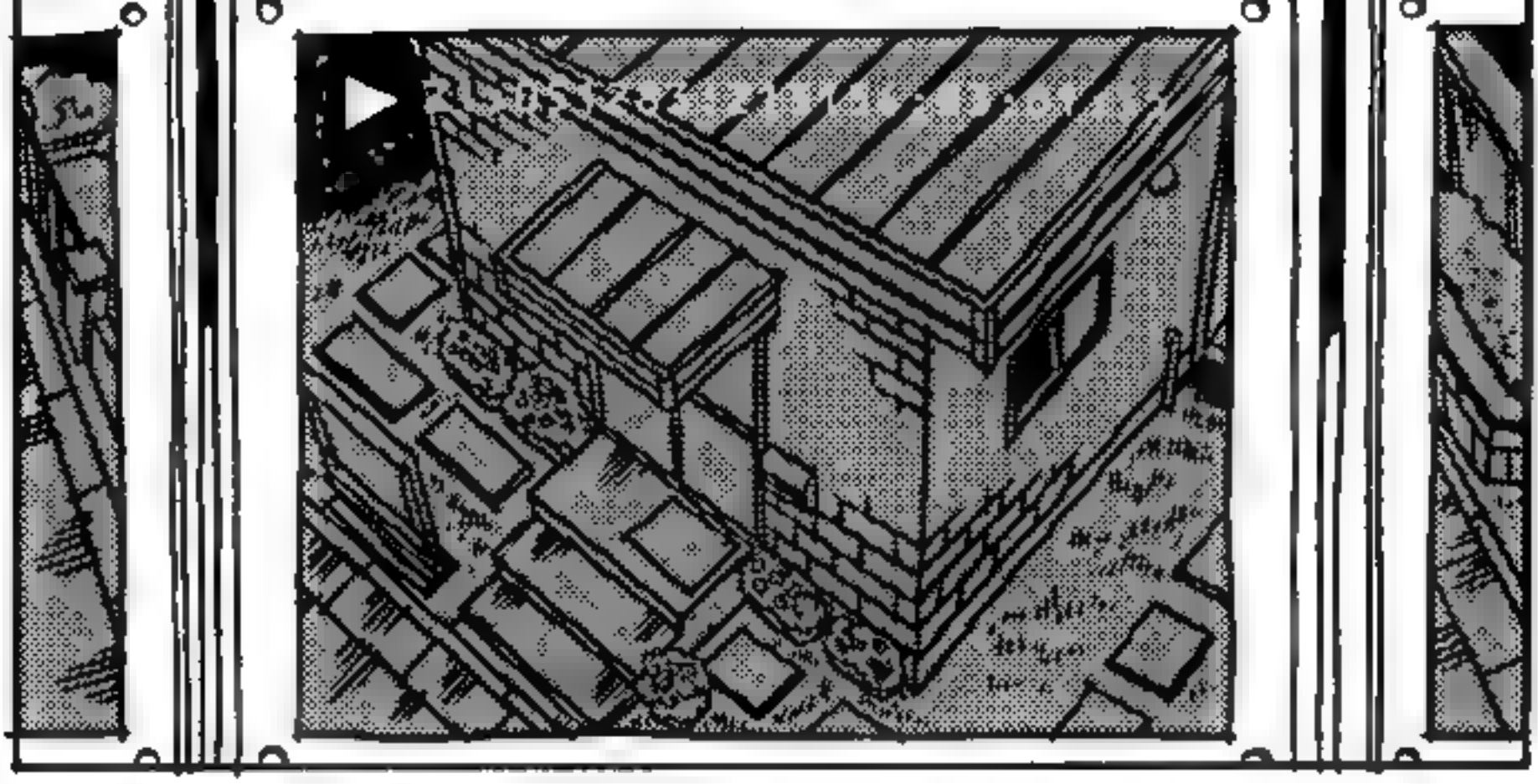
Owww!!

Gyaah !!

Aieee !!

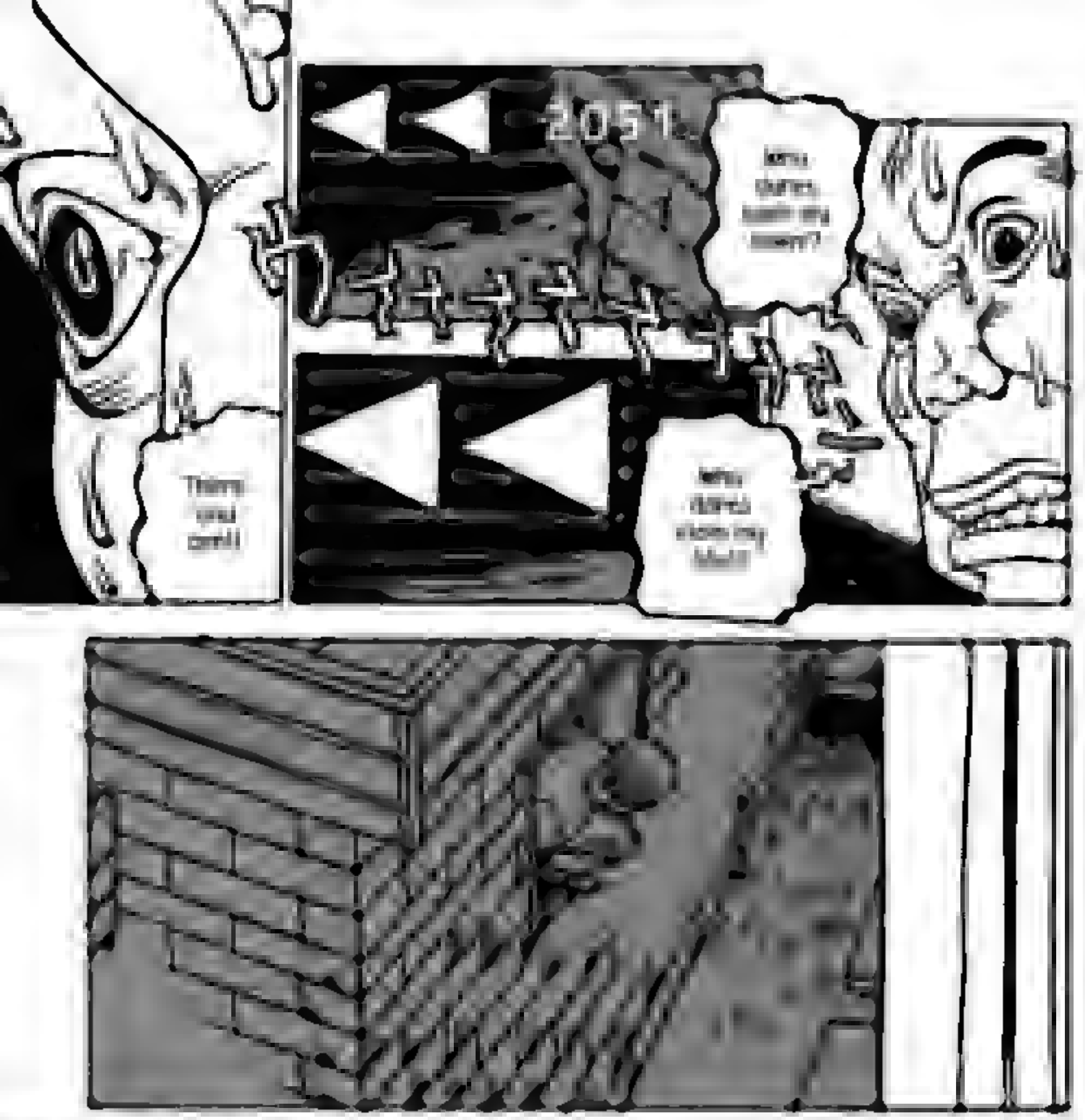
Gyaah!

Awwww noooo!



Who!?

Who!?
Who!?
Who!?
Who!?
Who are you!?
Who are you, you bastard!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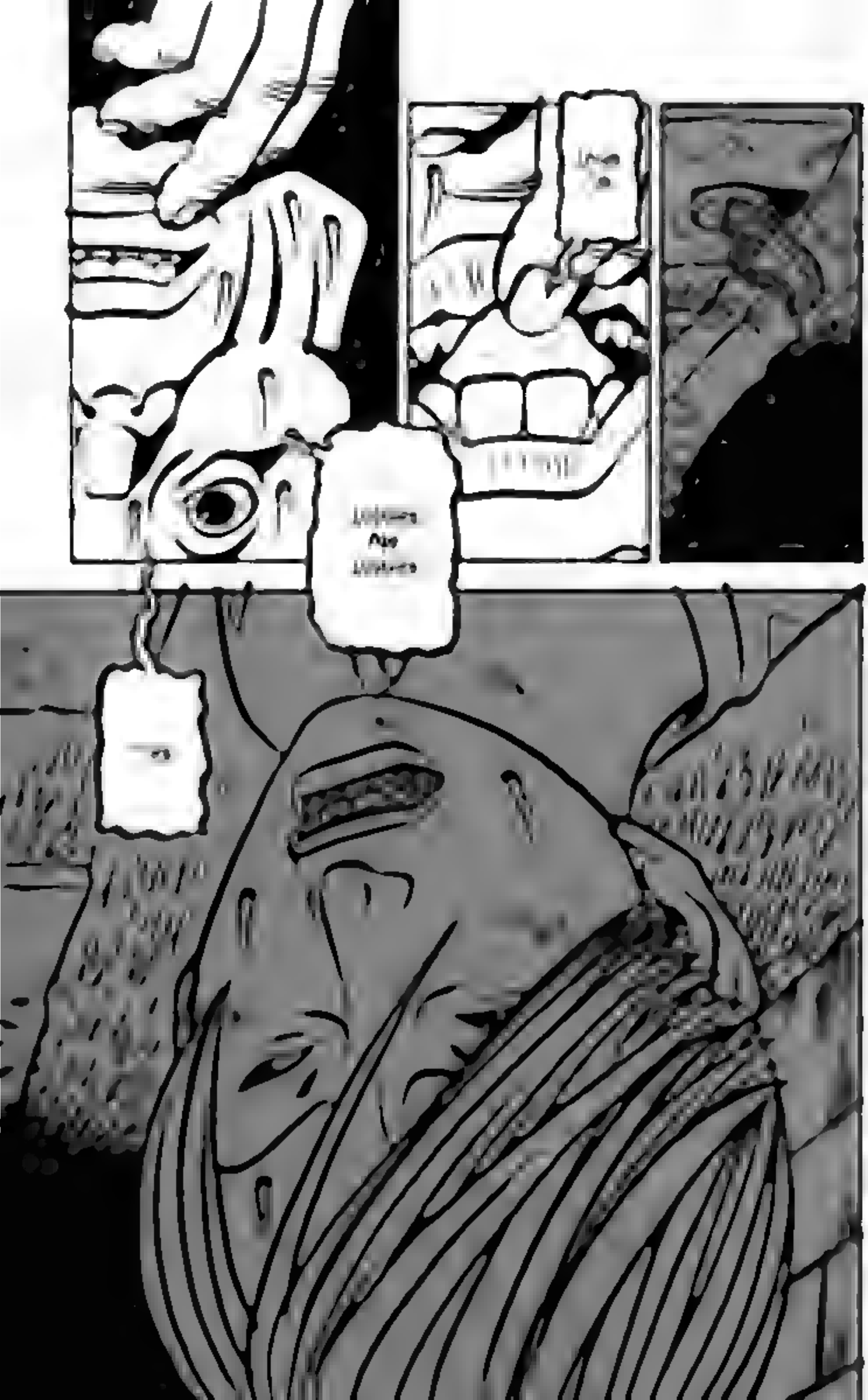


SOIL

Block 1-6 [End]

SOIL
Block 1-7 [Chime]

English version by NOMAD SOUL
QC by ERUTAN
kotonoha.monkey-pirate.com

DING DONG

BLOCK 1-7

DING DONG

DING DONG

DING DONG

DING DONG

DING DONG

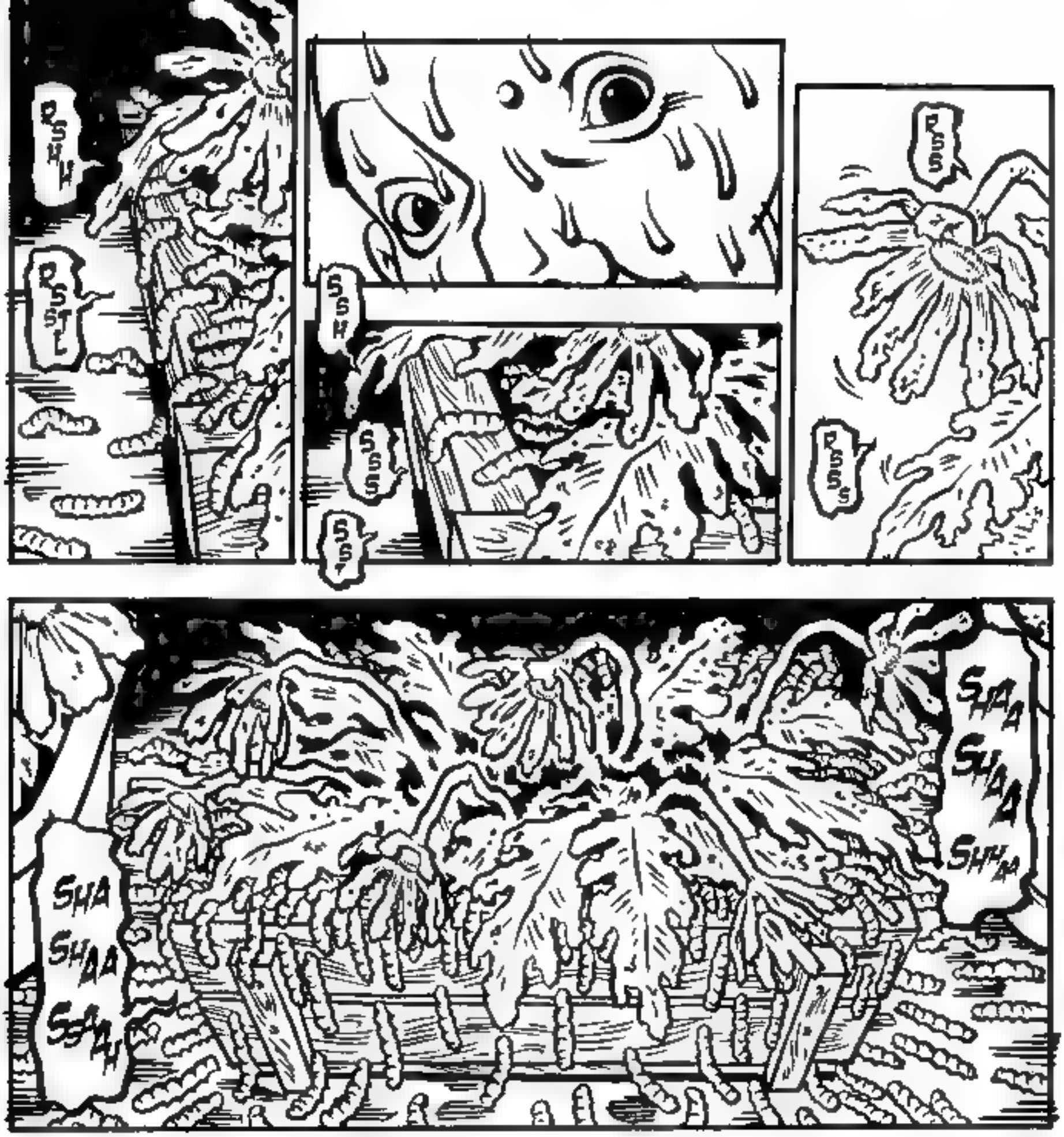
DING DONG

DING DONG

DING DONG

Dirty ...

...dirty...
It's still...
RSTL



[Chime]

Splish ...!

The town council received a ransom letter...

Have you heard it?

Why do we have to pay, anyway?

Imagine what our neighbors will say if we don't!

If everyone else pays, so will we!

Word is that everyone in town is to contribute to the ransom.

Ssh! We're supposed to keep it a secret from the police!

5000 yen per head. That makes 15,000 per 3-person family.

How much money are we talking about?

So it was a kidnapping after all?

He's got all the other council members under his thumb, I tell you.

Not the town council, its *president!*

After all, it's what the town council decided!

Ken

Kento!

GULP

Sir!?

...sir?

.....

.....

Mister Presi-dent, *sir!?*

Somehow, the heat made me feel all dizzy...

Oh dear, how embar-rassing ...

Are you all right, sir? You look a little pale...

With me?

I wondered if I might have a word with you.

Oh, Mrs. Miura. Just the person I was looking for!

I don't understand... What do you want from me?

U-um...

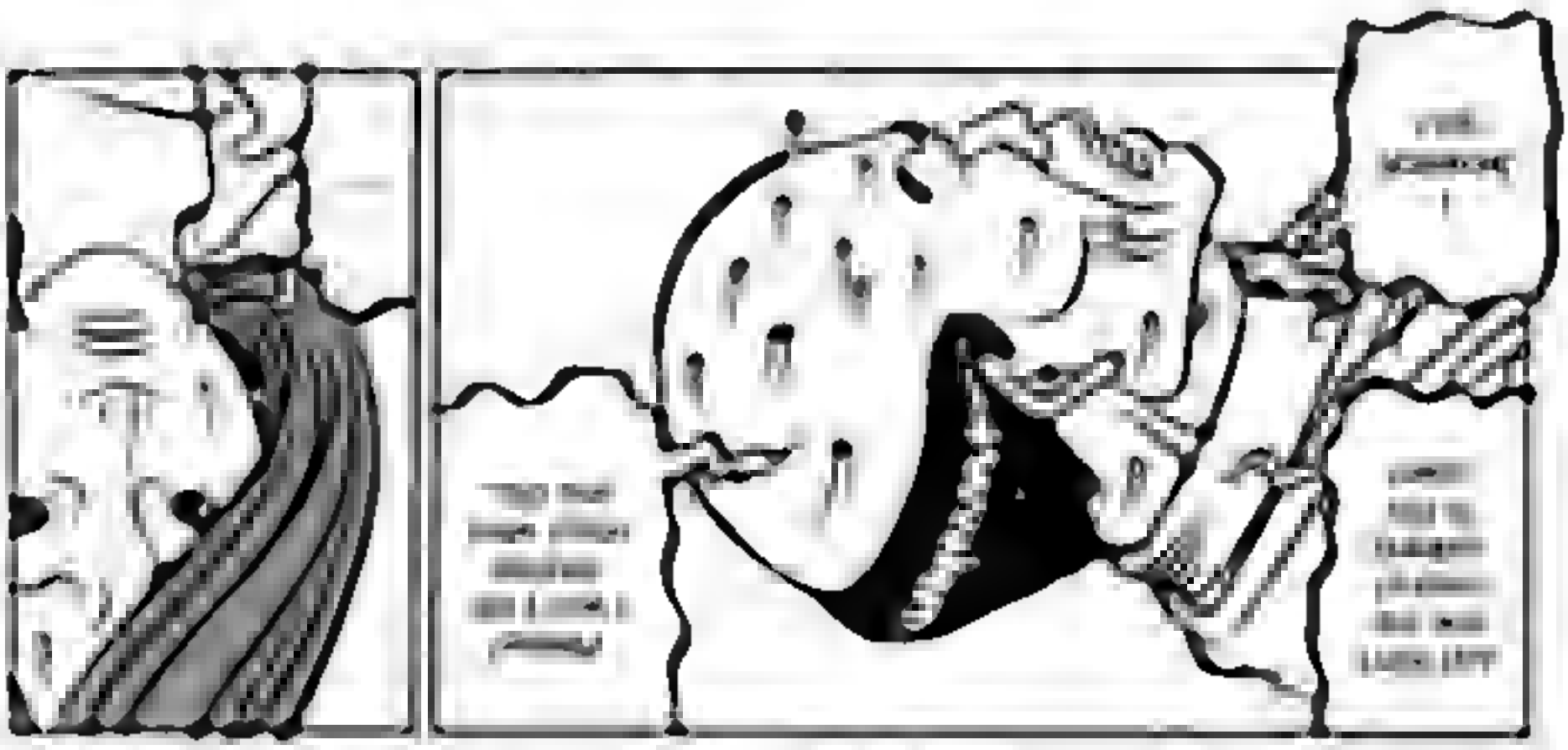
How do you know about that?

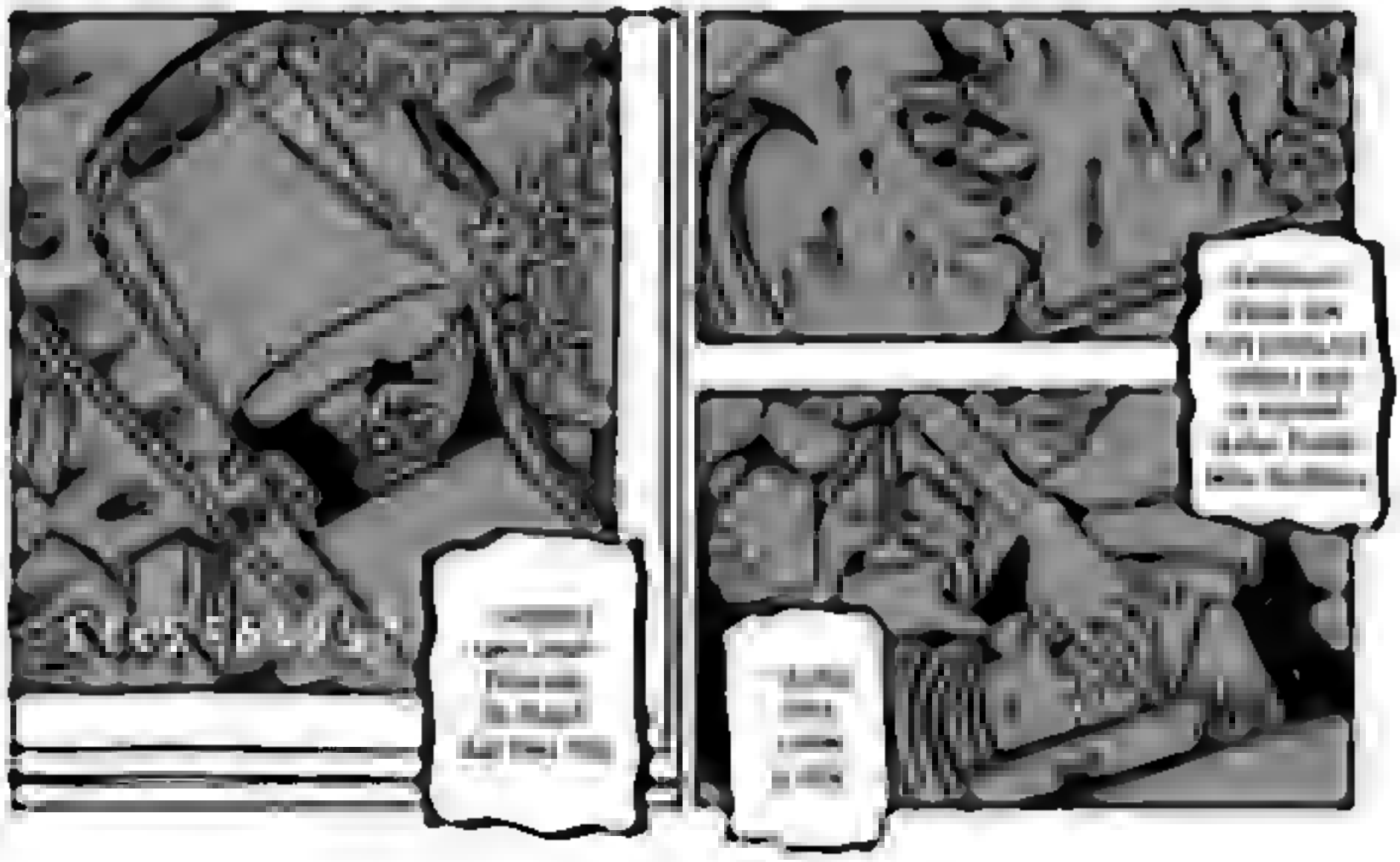
How ...

Please end your affair with Mrs. Takashima's husband!

I beg you graciously...

Please reflect on what you are doing!





Everybody has a weakness. There are no exceptions...

Nobody here has the guts to go against him.

Every now and then, I get a shiver down my spine.

It's as if there is someone out there, always watching my every move.

Even all their little secrets.

That's right.

How, you ask?

Yeah.

He's said to know everything about this town's citizens...

By the way, my eldest son saw something the other day...

It's the flowers, the cleaning, all those cheery greetings...

This place is suffocating me.

Oh my God!

He said he saw how that man killed the stray cats!

...but it's said that it was the town council presi-dent...

There's more! Okay, this is just a rumor...

He suppos-edly did it to drive Miss Sayuri away from here.

...who set fire to the Inari shrine.

Good day, Mrs. Miyahara.

I stopped by your house earlier today, but nobody was home.

Oh...?

G-good day, sir

Really?

So he's at a camp...

I've heard he hasn't been coming to school lately.

It was nothing important, I just wondered how Kento was doing.

He's camping in Nagano right now...

Well, Kento...

Are you sure he isn't in this town at this moment?

Are you absolutely sure about that, Mrs. Miyahara?

Are you?

Ow!

Ow!

Oww !

Oww !!

They were there to inquire after Kento, correct?

You received a visit from the two detectives yesterday, didn't you?

Tell me. You know Kento's current where-abouts, don't you?

...in... Nagano ...

Ke-Kento's camping...

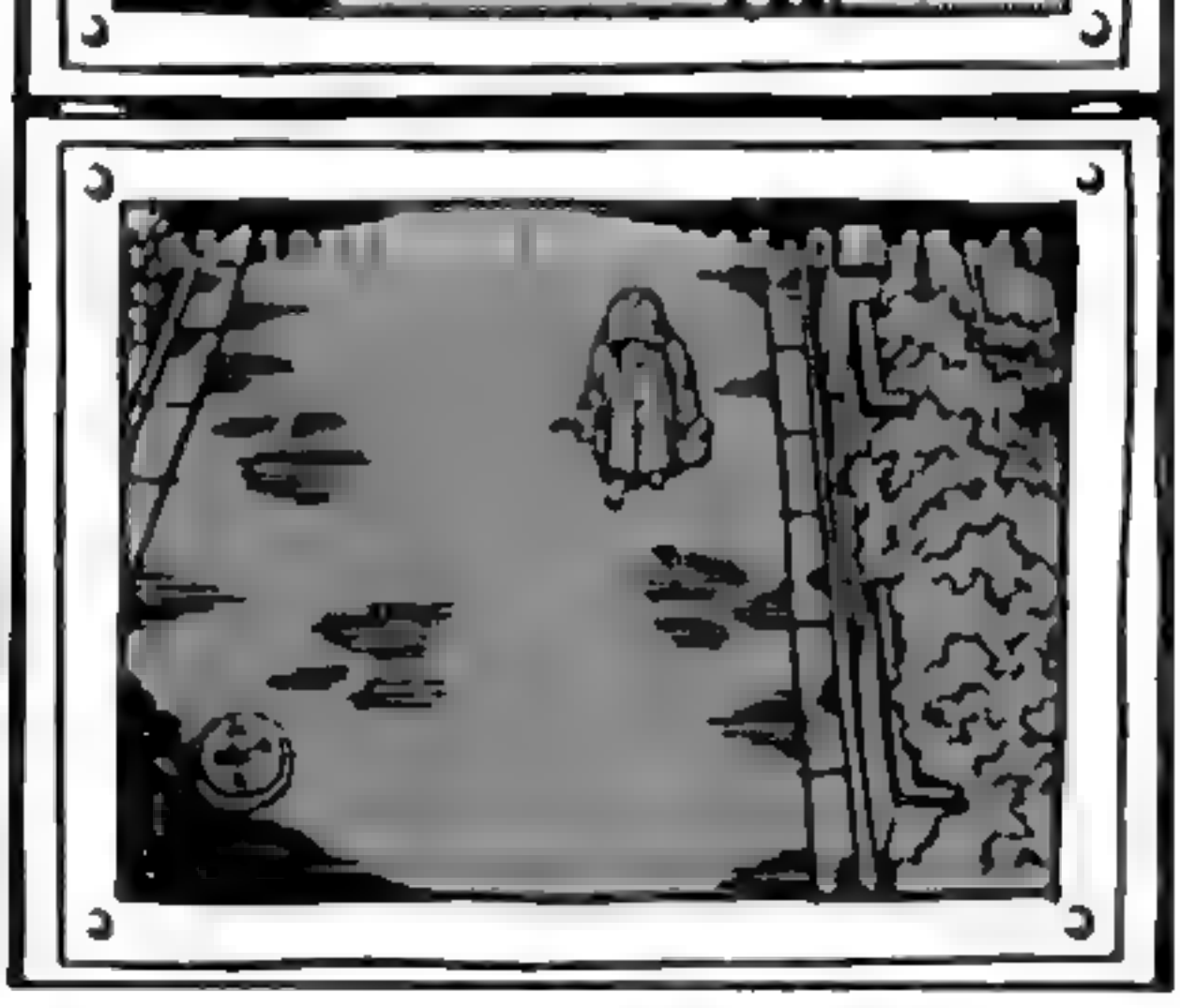
Wh...

Where?

Where?

Where are you, Kento?

It's that vile witch again!
Hell's bells!



Because of you, the whole town is covered with cat excrement!
Unhygienic... Revolting... Gloomy...
You should've *died* in that fire!

Why are you trying to give me a hard time?
Why are you doing this?
Where are you, Kenco?
Where are you?

But of course !

.....

Aren't we kindred souls who share a secret with each other?

Aren't the two of us friends?

Hic!

Everyone in that family is a stranger!

Strangers !

...you've stopped being yourself!

It was that Suzushiro girl! Ever since you took up with her...

I just want to make this town the perfect place to live. And yet...

I... All I want is for everyone to live in peace and harmony...

Why do they cheat on each other?

Why do they hate each other?

My...

My only place to be...

My pure spot...

This town is supposed to be my Utopia...

Ken-
Kento!!

It's
Kento!!

I can't lose him again!!

I-I must hurry up if I want to catch him!

H-he's coming in this direction!!

DING DONG

Kento !!

You've come to see me! I knew it!!

CLICK

CLICK

CLICK

It must be you!

Kento ?

What do you want?

Wha...

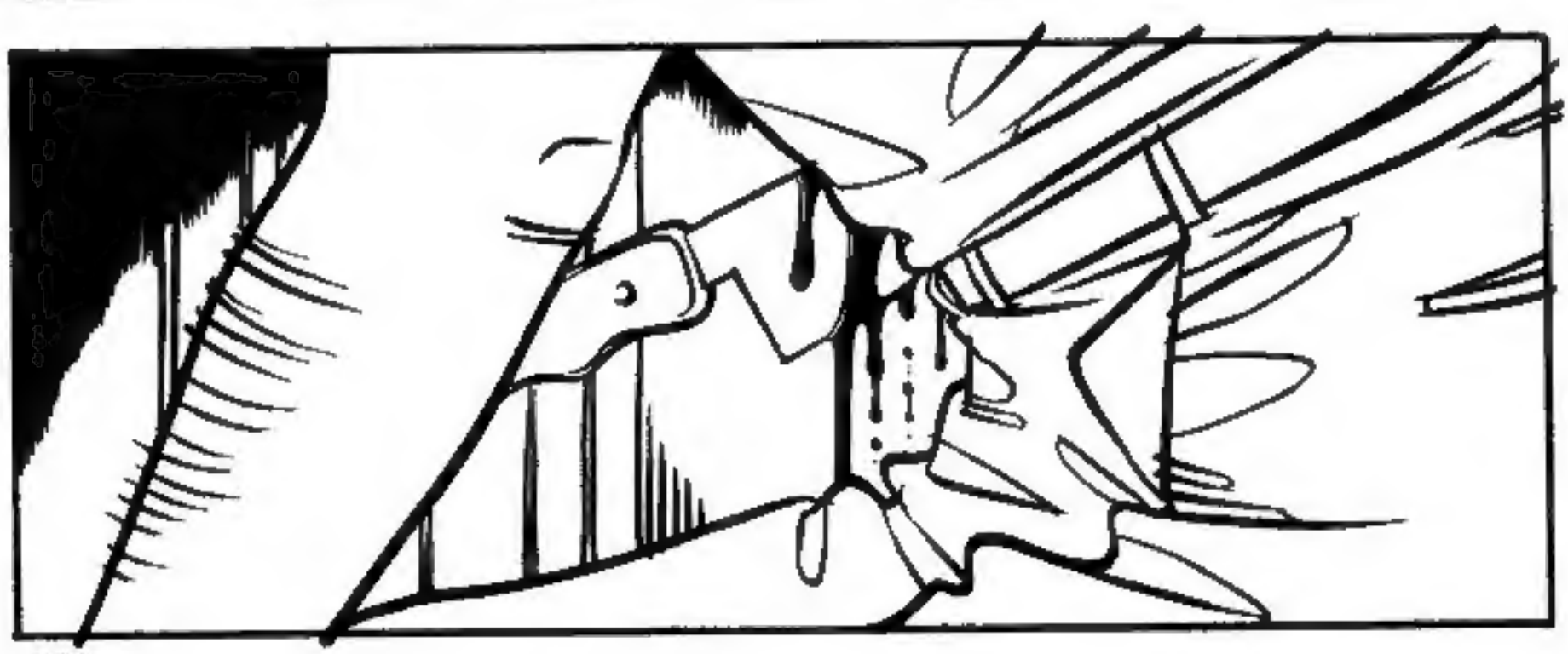
KLAK

SSSSH...

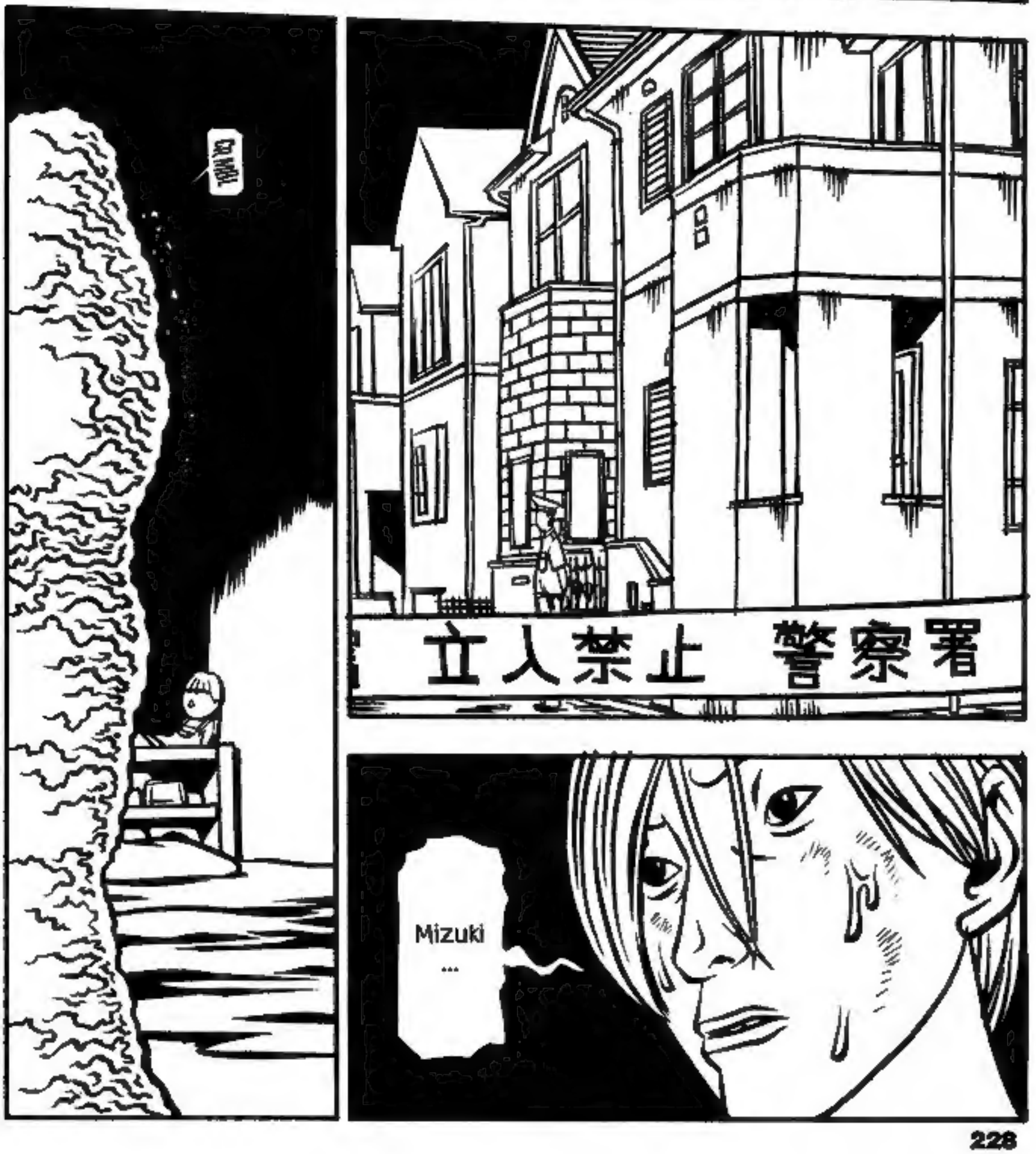
SSSSSH...

What... did you... do?

SSSH



* Keep Out! ** Police



SOIL［ソイル］1 END

To be continued in a next volume.